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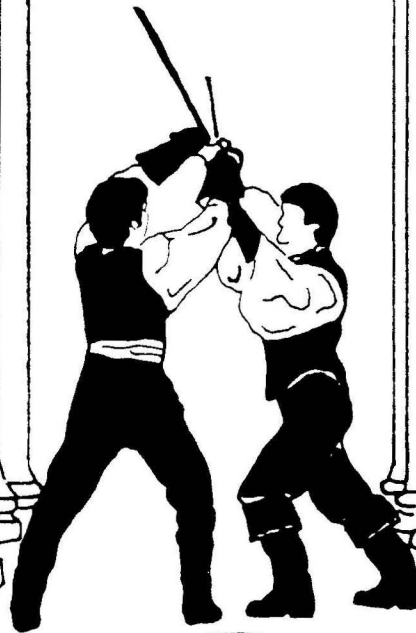
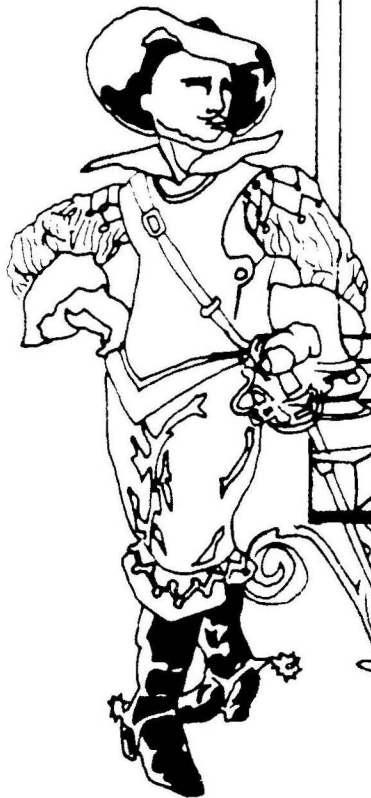
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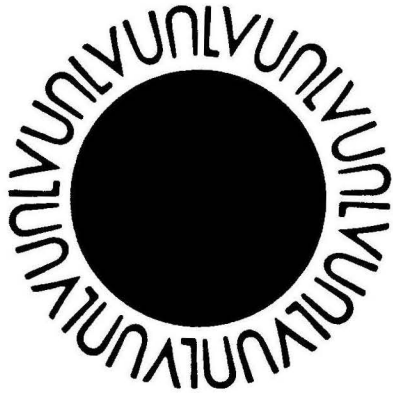
SOCIETY OF
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**DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE ARTS
COLLEGE OF ARTS AND LETTERS
UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA, LAS VEGAS**

The Fight MASTER

JOURNAL OF THE SOCIETY OF AMERICAN FIGHT DIRECTORS

SPRING 1989
VOLUME XII NUMBER 2

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THE FIGHT MASTER

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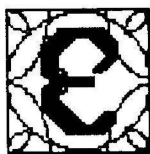
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SOCIETY OF AMERICAN FIGHT DIRECTORS

President	Joseph Martinez
VicePresident	Drew Fracher
Secretary/Treasurer	Richard Raether

The Society of American Fight Directors was founded in May, 1977. It is a non-profit organization whose aim is to promote the art of fight choreography as an integral part of the entertainment industry. Members of the Society of American Fight Directors serve the entertainment industry by promoting the aesthetics and safety of well-conceived fight choreography.

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EDITOR'S COMMENTS

In the Letters section, Robert Albright brings up another accident occurring during a fight scene in a ballet. Ballet is an area that the Society has not addressed in its quest for safety in the entertainment industry. And since becoming Editor in 1984, I have noticed there has been a number of serious injuries that involved accidental stabbings in nationally recognized ballet companies. It brought to mind the situation a number of years ago with our own ballet company in Nevada which is in residence at the University. The season included **Romeo and Juliet**. Since there had been the terrible accident in the American Ballet Theatre's production of **Romeo and Juliet** in 1985, the artistic director of the local company was approached. The three certified members in the area offered their services, not in choreographing the fight sequences (a rather sensitive area to approach with choreographers of ballet) but in taking a look at the fight sequences and spotting possible safety problems inherent in the choreography. Their serv-

ices were not needed. Fortunately, the only accident that occurred during the run of the show was when a dancer, fooling around backstage, nearly put out his eye with the quillon of the sword he was trying to balance on his nose. Such ignorance on the part of ballet companies needs to be addressed.

In the next few issues we are requesting those members and readers who have worked in ballet to share their experiences with the Society. How is violence handled in ballet? What types of problems does a fight choreographer have working with the ballet style and with the choreographer, artistic directors, and dancers? The Society has made giant strides in working with Equity contracts and insuring that certain procedures, financial remuneration and qualified personnel are used when fights are involved for those actor/combatants who are performing them. What about ballet?

Linda Carlyle McCollum

Initial membership in the SAFD is \$25. Dues for Fight Masters, Certified Teachers, Actor/Combatants, Associates, Affiliates and Friends are \$25 annually. All membership dues are to be paid in January to the Secretary/Treasurer, Richard Raether, 4103 Caraway Ct., Loves Park, IL 61111.

Inquiries concerning new memberships, status or change of address should be addressed to the Secretary/Treasurer, Richard Raether, 4103 Caraway Ct., Loves Park, IL 61111.

Applications for change in status within the Society should be addressed to Drew Fracher, c/o Abiding Grace Farms, 780 Bushtown Road, Harrodsburg, KY 40330.

Articles for consideration in **The Fight Master** should be submitted to the editor, Linda McCollum, Department of Theatre Arts, University of Nevada, 4505 Maryland Parkway, Las Vegas, NV 89154.

RESIDENT'S REPORT

Once again the members of the Society of American Fight Directors will have a great impact on the quality of the performance offerings this summer season throughout the nation. As actors, directors, choreographers, fight captains, teachers and producers, we continue to take a larger and larger share of the action sequences presented to our U.S. audiences.

This is as it should be. Over the last eleven years the SAFD has focused on quality, integrity and aesthetics. Such unswerving dedication to excellence among our membership continues to increase the quality of our services, so that the reputation of our organization has never been better and our influence grows.

Sometimes, however, growth can be painful, especially when we become complacent and are uncomfortable with change. The Society has certainly outgrown its financial resources. Additional sources of revenue must be found in the near future to deal with our burgeoning reputation and the national demand for our services. The expertise we offer is without precedent worldwide, and yet many of our members are not paid adequately for the quality of their services; even as more and more producers, directors and actors clamor for trained guidance because they now know it exists. Thus, many more individuals are seeking quality instruction and are straining the Society's abilities to provide it—especially outside of the major urban theatre centers. (The national workshop in Las Vegas will be the biggest ever with nearly a hundred individuals in attendance!).

Further changes are in the wind. Our potential for explosive growth and international recognition has existed for several years now. The urgent need to bring our message and our gifts to a larger audience demands fresh ideas and a renewed dedication to the SAFD charter. It is a good time to have your voice be heard in **The Fight Master**. It is a good time to seek additional training or to resolve to practice your skills each and every day, so as to be available to opportunity. It is a good time to help to point the SAFD in a productive direction by getting involved in this year's elections. It is a good time to promote the good works of the SAFD every day in your "neck of the woods."

I'll close by thanking two individuals who have helped foster the high ideals of the SAFD. We all owe a debt of gratitude to Linda McCollum, our immediate past Secretary to the Society and current Editor of **The Fight Master**. Linda has worked very hard over the years, donating her time and energy and considerable organizational skills, because she believes in what we do. She continues to selflessly serve as Editor and now has assumed the enormous task of On-Site Coordinator for the national workshops. Linda continues to work with our new Secretary Richard Raether, to allow for a smooth transition. Thank you Linda. And secondly, I wish to express our collective appreciation to Mr. James Finney, our immediate past Treasurer, for all of his astute financial guidance and good humor in shouldering an often thankless job. As you have already been informed by letter, Mr. Raether will also be assuming the duties of Treasurer.

I wish all of you a productive and enjoyable summer season. I hope to see or hear from many of you before the leaves fall. Until then, "Ne Puerto Gladium," "Never give a child a sword."

J. D. Martinez



VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

My Fellow Fighters,

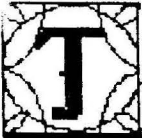
Spring is upon us and as with the seasons it is a time for new growth amongst us all. We have made some major inroads in the last year, and I think people in the industry are finally realizing what we're all about. Some people that is.

I recently had a very interesting conversation with two professional directors at the spring SETC convention in Louisville, Kentucky. They spoke to me of the continued confusion as to what our rankings of status mean and who they should look for when hiring both actors that fight and fight choreographers. It is the same old problem and one which I firmly believe that we must make every effort to clear up. We now have a beautiful brochure that is available to send out to people such as producers and directors who require such clarification. These are available to all Certified Teachers and Fight Masters for inclusion in their correspondence and if ANY member is in an area where they have access to producers and directors and are interested in getting the word out. Please feel free to contact me and I will be glad to send you some brochures to hand out as you see fit. Over and above all of this however, the bottom line is that we get the word out personally

and tell these professional organizations and Universities what the deal is—that if you are an actor/combatant you are qualified to fight in a show and to be a Fight Captain if chosen by the choreographer to do so. If you are a Certified Teacher, you are sanctioned by the Society to teach these skills and, if they are looking for a professional choreographer, then they should look first to the Fight Masters. It is important that we do not become elitist in our need to get things straightened out. We must make them all understand that what we seek is some standardization and more than anything else quality and safety in the work. It's not that we can do the job and no one else can; it is simply that we have the people available to do the job and we can guarantee a certain quality of work. That is the bottom line. So amigos, get out there and talk to people. Shake some hands and let people know that we are alive and thriving and we can help their production in many respects.

May you all have a terrific summer season. Fight safely and feel free to contact me at any time if there is ANYTHING that I can do for you. Take care.

Drew Fracher



TREASURER'S REPORT

First, I would like to thank Joseph Martinez and the other Fight Masters for their confidence in appointing me to the position of Secretary/Treasurer of the Society of American Fight Directors. Combining the offices of Secretary and Treasurer will, I hope, allow me to function more efficiently, and, therefore, more effectively for the members of the Society.

There is little to report currently as I am still in the throes of "transitional chaos." I have been receiving help, encouragement, and huge packets of information and materials from both Linda McCollum and James Finney which I am sorting through and trying to organize. Many thanks are due to both Linda and James for their support and help in this change over.

Regarding the future, I want my dual office to serve as an information resource for the Society. You will all be hearing more from me on this score as soon as I get things in gear.

I myself am in the process of relocating and can be reached at, 4103 Caraway Court, Loves Park, Illinois 61111.

Richard Raether



WORKSHOP REPORT

The 10th Annual National Stage Combat Workshop, held in association with the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, is the largest ever undertaken by the Society of American Fight Directors. The Society's growing national reputation, along with the handsome brochure designed by SAFD member Duane Orlemann, generated an overwhelming response to this year's workshop. After careful examination of the facilities the Society decided to expand the workshop to sixty participants in the National, with six in the Advanced Teacher Training. (And there are still people on the waiting list hoping to get in this summer). This means there will be three classes in session during each class period of the National Workshop.

Dr. Beverley Byers-Pevitts, Chair of the Theatre Department, was instrumental in working with David Leong, National Workshop Coordinator, to bring the Workshop to Las Vegas. The University is also pleased to have the workshop here since **The Fight Master** is housed in the College of Arts and Letters at UNLV. UNLV is a young, proud and growing university and in many ways has much in common with the Society and its growth potential. It should prove to be a mutually satisfying partnership.

The Society and the University are pleased with the tremendous response to this year's National Stage Combat Workshop. The Society recognizes its responsibility to continue to give the best professional training available in the stage combat arts.

Linda McCollum

FILM COORDINATOR

We are making inroads into the film industry! It is terrific to see other members of the Society working on film projects either in the capacity of stunt coordinators or stuntmen (women). I feel strongly that if we make the effort to get to know the various film commissions and film producers in our own areas, we will be making more headway into this arena. Keep in mind, as I have stated in the past, many independent film producers are getting tired of stunt people overpricing their skills. When a stunt coordinator is asking five thousand a week to do a basic action picture, I think that is exorbitant. Everyone wants to make a decent salary but greediness to the point of absurdity will eventually backfire. I am already observing several producers of "run-away" films who are not only using local talent in the acting and crew areas but they are also starting to trust and accept "local" stunt people. You know the old saying about "striking while the iron is hot." Well, I think we as a Society should start striking! The Hollywood stunt people have been insisting for years that they are the only ones who really know the stunt business and all the rest of us on the outside are merely frauds. Let me assure you my friends, the producers are getting wise. If we make a concerted effort to get to know the film business in our own areas, I am convinced that more and more producers and film makers will be looking for local talent to coordinate and execute the action in their films.

A major factor to keep in mind is the unquestionable fact that we save producers money! We save housing, transportation, per diems. This doesn't mean we are less qualified; it means that we are willing and able to work and at the same time save substantial amounts of money for the various films that come into our areas.

There is no myth about "Hollywood stuntmen." They all came from areas like Boise, Salt Lake, Nashville and Portland. They do not

become supermen when they get off the bus in Los Angeles. Of course there are superb stunt people living in Los Angeles. But there are also very talented people who live outside of L.A. And there is no need to go begging. Producers want to save money, and if we can convince them that we can do that and at the same time deliver a first rate product, I assure you, you will be working in the film industry.

I just finished working as stunt coordinator on the "pilot" film **Northwest Passage** in Seattle. It is an ABC project and the prospects look good for it going to series. ABC is very high on David Lynch who directed it and if it flies, I could be the first Society member to be coordinating a T.V. series. That is not just good news for me. It is good news for the Society! It is proof that we are a part of the film industry. Obviously, there are no guarantees in the film business, but with a lot of talent and a little luck we can be coordinating films and series in the forthcoming months and years.

I do want to emphasize that I am very much still in the theatre arena. I just finished my fortieth **Romeo and Juliet** but I look forward now to working both stage and screen.

In my next article I will share my experience of how to deal with a director who does not communicate his ideas clearly to his subordinates. In the meantime, start exploring the film possibilities in your area. Feel free to contact me regarding questions or problems. It is time we made our next move—that being a close association with the film industry as well as the theatre industry. Until next time. "It's a wrap!"

David Boushey
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THE SOUNDS OF VIOLENCE

Part II

by Bonnie Raphael

Introduction

In the same way that physical safety must be a primary concern for the director and fight director in any production, the vocal safety of the actor/combatants must be considered as well if these actors are to become and remain capable of their best performances throughout a show's run. Optimum vocal capability is best achieved via a combination of preventive voice care, developmental warm-up, balance-restoring warm-down, and healthy vocal technique.

Preventive Voice Care

If actors get into the habit of caring for their voices on a regular and ongoing basis, not only when in rehearsals and performances, but also throughout their daily lives as well, then they will stand a much better chance of preserving and improving the health, the stamina, the flexibility and the responsiveness of those voices in their professional work. There are a number of simple but important guidelines to follow:

1) General physical fatigue and lack of sufficient rest may be reflected in the sound of the voice, so when putting in long and/or demanding hours of voice use, it is important to make sure to get enough sleep or at least to increase the amount of time spent without talking. (This includes both regular, non-demanding conversational voice and telephone conversations.)

2) Many people do not drink sufficient water to keep the vocal folds moist and lubricated. It's better to sip small quantities of water frequently than it is to gulp down larger quantities of water just once or twice a day. It's a good idea for actors to get into the habit of carrying a plastic water container around with them and keeping it immediately accessible throughout their work day, especially if they are using their voices a great deal, perspiring a lot or working in air-conditioned spaces. It is also a good idea for them to invest in a bedside room humidifier, particularly during winter months when rooms are being artificially heated (and to keep these humidifiers scrubbed on a weekly basis).

3) Frequent throat clearing and stage whispering are detrimental to the vocal folds over a long period of time. Chronic post-nasal drip is frequently related to insufficient water consumption; the throat clearing it causes can sometimes be eliminated if water intake is sufficiently increased.

4) It is extremely important for actors to get into the habit of avoiding irritants to the throat whenever possible. This includes cigarette smoke (not only one's own but the ambient smoke of anyone smoking in the vicinity), alcohol (which tends to dehydrate the system), and air-conditioned air (which also tends to be under humidified—this is particularly important when travelling by air). In addition, any time the actor is given medication for whatever problem is present, the physician should be asked about side-effects of that medication on the voice. Illicit drugs are similarly detrimental to the voice, especially when they are used at the same time that the actor is using the voice in strenuous and demanding ways.

5) Good breathing habits, both on and offstage (e.g. having the breath centered low in the body, taking in sufficient air through the nose whenever possible, avoiding breath-holding) can make an enormous difference in the health and stamina of the voice.

6) Top and bottom teeth should always be separated by about a quarter inch of space. This is particularly important when the actor is engaged in physically demanding activity (e.g. extending a broadsword at shoulder height for longer and longer periods of time, choking another actor onstage). When speaking, whether onstage or off, the actor must relax the jaw and open the mouth—this will improve not only the health but the sound of the voice and the clarity of articulation.

7) It is important to get into the habit of monitoring one's own loudness at all times. Many performers and teachers get into the unnecessary habit of speaking loudly at all times and can preserve the voice by quieting down just a bit—although good “focus” for the voice needs to be present even when speaking softly. And it is better to speak softly but with tone than to whisper or to be “off” one's voice. The primary cause of vocal strain is speaking over considerable background noise—at loud cast parties, in a noisy car on a long trip, or over a ventilating system. Long (live or telephone) conversations made under such circumstances should be moved to another room whenever possible. Teachers who must use their voices over the competition of many other voices or the sounds of percussion or weapons need to find untaxing ways to get the attention of a large group without straining the voice—by clapping the hands or using a whistle or a buzzer or other signal to quiet the group down without having to shout it.

8) Extremes of pitch or quality should be avoided as well. Actors must get into the habit of not shrieking at exciting sporting events and of not overusing “funny voices” or sound effects or animal noises when just “fooling around.” If anything done vocally causes persistent throat irritation or coughing, alternative vocal choices need to be made which are healthier.

9) It is essential to get into the habit of warming up vocally before demanding voice work is to be done and warming down vocally as soon after the demanding voice work as possible. This can make a significant difference in the health and stamina of the voice. In addition, the actor must learn to pace him or herself so that sequences which are particularly vocally demanding are rehearsed in short spurts rather than for too long a period of time. Vocal rest (refraining from talking is particularly important when the vocal demands are strenuous and/or when the actor is working over a cold or an upper respiratory infection.

Warming Up and Warming Down

Any time the voice is to be used in a strenuous fashion (so often the case in scenes involving stage violence), a warm-up should be done to get the vocal instrument ready to work full-out and a warm-down should immediately follow that work. This warm-up should begin with a self-survey every time—to evaluate one's state of anxiety, fatigue, tension, concentration and to identify what needs extra attention and/or care on any given day.

Actual content of the warm-up may vary with a given actor's particular capabilities and needs, with the demands of a particular role or rehearsal, and with the characteristics of the space in which the rehearsal or performance is about to take place. However, there are certain basic ingredients which will serve the actor well in getting him or her ready to produce free, released and directed sound:

1) General physical loosening: Most actor/combatants are in the habit of doing some stretching and shaking to begin their warm-up. For vocal purposes, they should do so first with centered, silent, unrestricted breathing and then with fully vibrating sound accompanying these full body stretches and shakes. These should always be initiated with “h” to avoid sudden, loud onset of voice.

2) Breathing and alignment: Once the breath is centered and relaxed and the body has started waking up, attention should be shifted to rolling down and up through the spine—slowly and with awareness and then more quickly—in order to feel a strong connection between the soles of the feet and the crown of the head. Then, more demanding breathing work might be introduced (e.g. counting out loud in fully vibrating voice and on one breath from one to sixteen, with just a quick, silent “catch breath” between the sixteen-count sequences—the most important feature of this particular exercise is that there is no scrape or gasping sound during the inhalation, no matter how quickly it is accomplished).

3) In addition to warming up the body in general, for vocal purposes specific attention must be given to the top quarter of the body, the organs most directly concerned with the actual production of sound. Slow, easy head rolls, shoulder swings, yawns, jaw massage and loosening, tongue stretches and lip flexibility should be addressed, while breathing remains free and silent and while accompanying sound may be soft but is nevertheless fully vibrating. (Specific exercises for the top quarter of the body can be found in the Lessac and Linklater texts listed at the end of this article). Voice will be freer if just a bit of time is spent getting the shoulders and neck and jaw and tongue “out of the way” of emerging sound.

4) The actor is now ready to home in specifically on the voice. He or she can sing or call or chant or hum to expand the range and incorporate the resonators. Different “neighborhoods” of the voice can be explored, along with physical and vocal greetings or challenges or exchanges which will allow the voice to ring out, to cross space without being forced or pushed or constricted. Articulators (lips, tongue, soft palate) can be exercised and loosened as well via the use of tongue twisters or short excerpts from Dr. Seuss or Gilbert and Sullivan patter songs.

5) Every warm-up should end with another spot check to make sure all needs have been addressed and that the actor feels ready, sounds ready, and is mentally focused on the particular task at hand.

As important if not even more important to the vocal health and stamina of the actor is a warm-down immediately following vocally-demanding rehearsals or performances. It does not take very long but can make a significant difference between a feeling of fatigue and strain and one of ease and balance. The actor should drink some water to rehydrate the system, should yawn deeply a number of times to take air deep into the body and stretch the organs of voice production, should do some deep breathing through the nose to reestablish freedom in the breathing mechanism, should roll the head and shoulders and loosen the jaw and the tongue to reestablish free movement in those areas, and should do a bit of humming in the midrange of the voice to get the vocal folds working easily and comfortably again. This simple regimen will contribute to the longevity and flexibility of the voice.

Healthy Vocal Technique: Grunting and Screaming

Grunting and screaming are two things which actor/combatants are often asked to do. Poor technique in these areas can produce strain, fatigue, vocal limitation and even physical damage whereas good technique can produce an excellent, theatrically effective result while preserving and protecting the actor’s vocal mechanism.

Grunts can be dangerous if the actor is doing a lot of breath-holding at throat level during a fight sequence and/or skill initiating the grunt in the throat with a sharp, abrupt, loud onset of voice. If the impulse to make sound originates in the same part of the body as the impulse to move and if both of these are connected to an unrestricted deep breath, the grunt will take care of itself; it will be organic, well-supported and spontaneous. If there is some fatigue or tenderness in the throat area following the rehearsal of a fight sequence or a degeneration in voice quality, then the actor is working too hard in the throat area and needs to ease up muscularly—by either initiating the grunt with an “h” sound rather than a vowel to get air flowing through the larynx or by beginning the grunt softly but with focus for just an instant and then letting full loudness come into it. These techniques can and should be practiced in isolation, out of context until they are second-nature, until they need not be thought about consciously to occur.

If all the grunts sound too much alike so that the dynamics of the fight are not fully served, then the actor’s attention needs to be directed to the specific relationship between the physical and the vocal: Where is a particular blow being taken in the body? How serious a hurt is either being inflicted or being incurred? Further explorations of pitch neighborhoods and less commonly used resonators will open up new vocal possibilities for the actors and give added dimension to the music of a particular fight.

If done correctly, selectively and with care, screaming is another vocal technique which can do much to add to the credibility and illusion of real danger in a scene involving stage violence. The actor must be sure to warm up as close to the time of the screaming scene as possible, to rehearse that scene in short spurts with vocal rest in between, and to warm down immediately after the screaming in order to minimize both straining and recovery time for the voice.

The best scream involves the perfect combination of tone and noise. The presence of free, fully vibrating tone protects the throat, aids in projection, and gives the actor artistic control of the product, but a scream which is all tone and no noise is simply not convincing to the ear of the audience member. The presence of noise (produced by some constriction in the throat but not in the vocal folds themselves) gives the scream the sound of authenticity but can fatigue or strain the actor’s voice. If there is a vocal or singing coach connected with a company or department, that specialist can help the actor achieve free tone at will, high in the range for women and middle in the range for men. That anchor, produced by hard palate focus, good breath support, a relaxed jaw, neck, shoulders and tongue and a forward feeling to the lips and cheeks, will help protect the actor against harm or damage. The degree of noise should be controlled by the actor and should consist of the smallest effort possible necessary to produce the desired effect. To make sure the constriction is not specifically laryngeal, the actor can massage the throat during the scream or check with the fingers off both hands on the grunt of the neck to see that the constriction occurs higher up than the larynx itself (sort of like gargling).

It is best to acquire this particular skill in the presence of an experienced voice or singing coach rather than doing it on one’s own, but this is not always possible. There are some further guidelines which can serve the actor seeking to perfect screaming technique:

- 1) Head posture should be as good and as free as possible, given the staging.
- 2) Throat and mouth should be well-lubricated—water should be sipped frequently rather than gulped occasionally and, during rehearsals, the actor can either chew gum or suck on a mint or cough drop to retain mouth moistness.

3) The scream should be initiated with an unrestricted deep breath. The actor must make sure that there is no stridor or scrape or gasping sound while that air is taken in and that the scream itself is either initiated with an “h” sound rather than a vowel or that he or she starts the scream softly but with hard palate focus just for an instant before achieving full loudness. The most important thing is to avoid the simultaneous initiation of sound plus the addition of tension plus maximum loudness. The actor should never lose control completely and just let the voice do whatever it wants—something should always be kept in reserve as protection, as a retainer of balance.

4) The actor must be sure to warm down as soon after the screaming scene as possible and to avoid direct contact with all irritants (e.g. cigarette smoke, cold air, alcohol, cocaine, marijuana) while the throat is feeling at all vulnerable.

It is best to practice screaming technique as an isolated, out of context set of skills until they are learned by the muscles involved and not only understood by the brain. Screaming technique should be mastered and then brought into the theatre with the actor when the show goes into rehearsal in the same way as stage combat techniques are perfected before the fights in any given production are scheduled to be choreographed. Even with good technique, rehearsals involving screaming should be kept short and vocal rest periods encouraged between them.

Conclusion

The skilled and knowledgeable actor/combatant understands that true mastery occurs only over a considerable period of time and with conscious, aware repetition of all requisite skills. In terms of both voice and combat, he or she is seeking to achieve the illusion of effort as opposed to real effort in the body and the voice. In the best of all possible worlds, he or she will achieve the desired effects without cannibalizing the body or the voice in order to do so. If, however, the actor or teacher or fight director or director becomes aware of danger signs which indicate that strain or minor injury has taken place (i.e. increased effort in the production of voice, noisy inhalations, degeneration of voice quality), then there are two courses of action which can be taken.

The actor him or herself or the fight director or the voice coach must get the director to rehearse demanding sequences in short spurts and/or allow the actors to mark the scene vocally when the emphasis in a particular rehearsal is not on the acting values. (This is particularly important when the actor is working either with a cold or with a voice that is already strained and tired).

If the actor’s vocal difficulties are not resolved via improved voice care, consistent employment of warm-up and warm-down and use of more efficient vocal technique, then the best course of action is to refer that actor to an ear, nose and throat specialist (ENT or otolaryngologist), who works with performers, for examination, diagnosis and advice. These referrals are a perfect example of “a stitch in time saving nine”—waiting until the problem is a serious one is foolhardy when the solution to a simpler problem may be easy and more accessible.

The voice will serve the actor wonderfully and will retain its full capabilities over a long period of time if it is given the care and attention one would give to any highly-valued and unique instrument.

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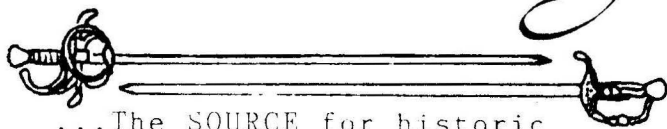
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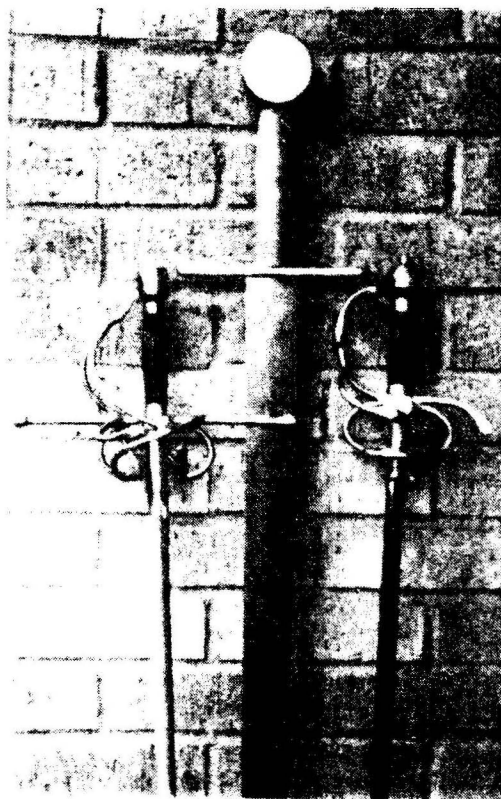


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Edwin Booth and the Hamlet Duel:

A Structuralist Perspective

By Robert W. Dillon, Jr.

One of the major paradoxes of the critical and performance history of **Hamlet**, a play fraught with paradoxes and already nearly overwhelmed with critical study, surrounds the duel between Laertes and Hamlet in the final moments of the play. **Hamlet** criticism (often the product of an antic disposition, or at least foolhardy bravado), performance effort, and the dramaturgic decision seldom give this scene any but the most slight attention. Alan C. Dessen, in his essay "Hamlet's Poisoned Sword: A study in Dramatic Imagery," writes, "In spite of its climactic position in this most widely discussed of all plays, the fencing match has received relatively little attention from scholars and critics" (64).

Nothing could be more remarkable. The action and dramatic tension of **Hamlet** culminates in the duel. As the "most thrilling climax to the most thrilling play of all time" (Wilson 279) the duel scene presents an exciting spectacle, a "non-intellectual ending to a highly contemplative play" (Dessen 65).

Several factors account for the apathetic treatment given the final fight in **Hamlet**. None excuse it. The critic, director, or actor may lack the detailed historical knowledge and delight in trifles which marks the specialist. Yet, it is at risk of dead, flat failure that any element of a play's structure, style, or plot stands outside of their concern. For this reason, a methodology for staging violence, beyond what A. L. Soens has termed the "thud and blunder parody of fencing forced on most modern Shakespeare audiences" (1253), is sorely needed. "The nature of those fights which appear in so many of the 'classical' plays of the English theatre has hardly ever been related to the total dramatic development," wrote Arthur Wise (3). Modern directors have failed, for the most part, to create a workable technique, a stage fight methodology based in solid knowledge and critical analysis, with which to attack scenes of violence. Modern actors are, for the most part, no better off. Happily, the Society of American Fight Directors has done much in the past decade to remedy this situation. European and Canadian counterparts to this organization have done their part as well. Also, internationally known fight directors like William Hobbs have, in recent years, done much to promote a higher standard in dramatic combat. The problem is that Hobbs and others like him work mainly in film, video, and "big-time" professional productions, and not in the broad reaches of professional and amateur stages. Video productions, film, and large-scale professional productions, by their very nature, can and do present better fighters. They also pay better.

The fact that swordplay—in the vast majority of curriculums—no longer forms a regular part of dramatic training further contributes to the problem. Richard Gradkowski, honorary historian of the Society of American Fight Directors and secretary/treasurer of the United States Fencing Coaches Association, has stated that while the field of fight choreography is undergoing "an evolution," the training of actors leaves the area "largely incomplete." Today's actors and directors simply do not handle swordsmanship well—technically or physically (Gilder 69-70). Until the nineteenth century the sword was as much a feature of a gentlemen's wardrobe as were his shoes, and cultivation of the art of fence considered the **sine, qua non** of education. Nowadays the distance between everyday life and weapons of percussion, perforation and puncture has grown until only very few specialists truly know much about it.

Furthermore, knowledge and physical cultivation of the modern sport of fencing, although certainly contributing to grace and bodily control, does not translate automatically into the ability to stage or perform an historically accurate and dramatically interesting fight. Modern fencing represents the culmination of centuries of experimentation towards development of safe competitive activity. Consequently, techniques of modern foil, epees and sabre fencing have, at best, limited value on stage. Edgerton Castle, fencing historian and bibliographer par excellence, wrote on this subject:

Actors (and producers) also, who, in every other case, are most particular about historical accuracy, generally dispose of all questions relative to fighting by referring them to the first fencing master at hand: and accordingly one sees Laertes and Hamlet with the utmost sangfroid going through a 'salute' which, besides being perfectly unmanageable with rapiers, was only established in all its details some fifty years ago. There would indeed be less anachronism in uncorking a bottle of champagne to fill the king's beaker than there is in Hamlet correctly lunging, reversing his point, saluting carte and tierce, etc.—foil fencing, in fact—in spite of the anticipation raised by Osric's announcement that the bout should be played with rapier and dagger. The introduction in the play of rapier and dagger at the Danish Court during the middle ages is, of course, no less an anachronism than that of a small sword bout in the performance, but if the actor's part be to carry out the author's ideas, it is certainly a wonder that greater care should never have been bestowed on that scene (Castle 3-4).

With the kind of physical endurance needed for a role that presents its most telling athletic demands only after a grueling three-to-six-hour-long performance, and with the lack on the part of most modern actors and directors of all but the most rudimentary skill with and historical knowledge of swords and swordsmanship, it is indeed no wonder that few are truly capable of choreographing a fight in modern times.

In the 1860's, when actors still for the most part included fencing training in their programs of study, the situation may have been a bit different. Throughout the 1700's the transition of swordsmanship from the brash and bold, athletic and rough play of rapier—the weapon's relative weight making the play somewhat inelegant and harsh—to the finesse and elegance of small-or court sword play found expression in the works of the Angelos, Hope, McBaine, and many other theorists and practitioners (Morseberger, Wise, Castle et al). What had been an art of personal combat gradually became an activity practice for its own sake and for the sake of gentlemanly refinement. Modern "fencing" flows directly from this set of cultural and social matrixes.

Romantic tradition by the 1860's had also begun to enmesh Hamlet in so dense a web of psychological study that his physical actions began to be relegated to his emotional and internal ones. The Romantics painted their Hamlet as a model of the Romantic Poet, "brooding procrastinator and ineffectual intellectual (Charney xvi)." Their Hamlet had his center in the mind.

Though the play indeed may be said to move largely within Hamlet's tortured mind, the moment of the final duel, and the very real dueling between Claudius and the Prince which precedes it and leads inexorably to it—Hamlet fighting his enemies rather than talking, and giving a good account of himself in the face of very bad odds—stands central to the drama and, when ignored or slighted, drastically diminishes the play's total impact (6). To deny the power of this moment destroys **Hamlet**. Yet the power of the Romantic tradition in the 1860's was such that it could not but change the perceptions of the cognoscenti—at least. Goethe's widely read novel, **Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship** had described Hamlet as a "soft...royal flower...a tender soul.... There is an oak tree planted in a costly jar, which should have borne only pleasant flowers in its bosom: the roots expand, the jar is shivered" (Mills 126-127).

This Romantic model found full expression in the **Hamlet** of Edwin Booth. A commentator of the time, writing in December 1864, suggests something of Booth's commitment to the Romantic model, and something of the wide-spread nature of the public acceptance of what had begun to be a near mythical vision of the Prince:

No one, he exclaimed, who truly comprehends Hamlet's character could believe that Shakespeare ever put into Hamlet's mouth such terms as 'Ha! Boy,' 'truepenny,' and 'old mole.' These are the intrusions of 'vile tamperers': 'Is it not horrible! most repulsive, to have such words set down for Hamlet to speak to his dear Father's Spirit? I need not say Booth ignores them entirely, and such as these.' The text was of course cleansed everywhere of vulgarity and bawdry (Shattuck 55).

The idealization of Hamlet, and of Booth's identity with that idealization was carried to extremes of idolatry by William Winter in the **Tribune** of March 21, 1864:

He is inexpressibly gentle. No leaf of lily was ever finer or purer than Hamlet's instincts of courtesy are to his fellow men. His youth has been noble and manly. He has honored father and mother with that beautiful filial affection which is rooted in the soul, and which shows the angel in man....

This is that Hamlet which we see in Mr. Booth's representation, and that seems to us admirable because—among other reasons—it is Shakespeare's creation. To lose it is to lose a joy and a benefit (Winter).

An old saying among British actors suggests that there exist only two ways to play Hamlet: fast and slow. Though, like all platitudinal truths, this seems, on the surface at least, to be a complete generalization, the notion contains a germ of profound wisdom. Hamlet may in fact be “fast”—active, passionate, aggressive, hard, colloquial, ugly, cynical, angry, cruel, etc. He may, just as clearly, be “slow”—soft, lyrical, beautiful, spiritual, passive, idealistic, tender, tearful. It is possible to stretch the fast slow polemic to include a further generalized division of “Hamlets”: fast Hamlets equal masculine Hamlets, slow equal feminine. The polemic further validates itself when the two camps become poles in a continuum from which the actor selects while, of necessity, they maintain the strongest allegiance with one or the other categories. Slow-Feminine Hamlets possess some Fast-Masculine elements in their characterizations. Fast-Masculine Hamlets may be enriched with Slow-Female attributes. The categories serve to enrich one another; they are not mutually exclusive. John A. Mills suggests in fact that:

A truly versatile actor might elect to move back and forth between the two camps, making common cause with each by turns. That is to say, there ought to be nothing to prevent a Hamlet from being now melancholy and now enraged, now frightened and now bloodthirsty, now withdrawn and now strenuously engaged, now lovable and now hateful, and so on. That is, in fact, the “Correct” approach if one subscribes to the view that what sets Hamlet apart from all other fictional creations is the degree to which Shakespeare dared to endow him with that radical indeterminateness which characterizes human life itself. Something of the full range of human possibility in thought and feeling is to be found in the character, and the conscientious actor must try to play it all (Mills 285-286).

This inclusion of elements from the fast and the slow camps may impart that brilliant humanity which invigorates the truly great portrayal of the Prince. Hamlet thus becomes a human being. Yet the polemically arranged divisions still exist, actors favoring in their choices one or the other camp. Fast Hamlets include such men as Edwin Forrest, Lord Laurence Olivier, and Nicol Williamson (Mills et

al). All these men stamped their performances with a certain masculinity which modified the character's deep melancholy. Slow Hamlets of note found life in the work of John Gielgud, Ian McKellen, and most especially Edwin Booth. In McKellen's consummate hands the character took on a rich femininity which saw the actor-Hamlet sitting always with a stiff, straight back, knees together and hands on the thighs. This is a Hamlet of the slow variety. It is also a "Romantic" Hamlet since the Hamlet of Goethe and other Romantic authors clearly fits the slow category. Booth's must have been even more so (Miller, Shattuck et al).

The problem with all this is (and has always been, I maintain) that Hamlet's skill in fence must appear to an auditor to be as real and as vibrant as his skill with words. For, from the first Hamlet controls the duel scene. He uses both skill with words and skill with his sword to do so. In its Elizabethan staging the duel must have reflected Hamlet's control of the situation through his skill with rapier and dagger (Castle, Morseberger, Wise et al). His skill with words is shown clearly on its own:

Hamlet. I embrace it freely;
And will this brother's wager frankly play.
Give us the foils. Come on.

Laertes. Come, one for me.

Hamlet. I'll be your foil, Laertes; in mine ignorance
Your skill shall, like a star i' the darkest night,
Stick fiery off indeed.

Laertes. You mock me, sir.

Hamlet. No, by this hand. (Act V, scene ii)

Booth's slow-feminine-Romantic Hamlet needed a different approach to the duel from the rough and ready play with rapier and dagger characteristic of historically "Correct" stagings. The final swordplay must fit the mood, tempo, and structure of the "slow" model. The style Booth chose, in fact, became the cause celebre of all "romantic" stagings of the duel scene which would follow, including the work of John Gielgud (Gilder et al). That style of swordsmanship, as I have mentioned above, saw formalization in the works of Hope, McBaine, and the Angelo brothers (Wise et al). It is of course the art of small sword play which evolved over the decades into the art of "French" fencing.

Such fencing is characterized by an approach that is the very antithesis of rapier play. Refined and elegant, the sport and practice were thought of as high art and indispensable part of a man's education. By the 1860's the art of self preservation inherent in the old small sword play had, with perfect similitude, become the pastime of foil fencing. Because of the need to fit even the action of swordplay within his "slow-Romantic" structure, Booth chose to stage the scene with the foil. In style, appearance, and technique, the art fits his model perfectly. Never mind that the text calls for rapier and daggers to be the weapons used; never mind that history and archaeology demonstrate clearly that the old weapons play was an indispensable part of Shakespeare's theatre. Booth presented a fully wrought and carefully structured production based on many years of trial and error and careful study. No element of that structure could be safely overlooked

Even using the elegant and gentlemanly style of 18th century small sword play as refined further into modern fencing, the character's gentleness and refinement could well be endangered. Nowhere must Hamlet appear too masculine, too athletic. Booth's staging of the action of the scene itself further cemented and perfected the structure of the whole without allowing any gaps in the complete picture of his "unsullied," "delicate," and "pure" Prince.

My own system for designing and executing fights, as well as examining extant examples of fights, begins simply by construction of a structural matrix for the scene. This matrix is divided into four distinct sections which form a chronological plan for the fight. These are: inception, action (including any minor climaxes), climax and resolution-end. Following is a look at the Booth staging from the perspective of this structural matrix and Booth's Romantic ideal.

According to Shattuck, the scene included elements of staging which reinforced the Booth characterization completely (Shattuck 274). Inception obviously, in this case, is brought about through the machinations of the King and Laertes. Hamlet is fully unconscious of the true nature of the "brother's wager" he is about to "frankly play." Hamlet is an innocent dupe, a victim of his own complacency—at least during this phase.

After the King brings him and Laertes together, Hamlet begins the action portion of the scene with a series of tosses, catches and flexings of the blade of his foil which serve the Prince as preparation for the coming contest. His mood is obviously not that of one preparing for a blood match. After coming to the center to face one another, Laertes presents his chest and Hamlet gently touches him with the tip of his foil. The process is reversed and repeated. And, the formalities ended, the bout begins.

The combatants cross the stage once or twice and suddenly at center there is a swift circling movement wherein Hamlet wards a thrust from Laertes, passes his sword beneath his own arm so that its point is near to Laertes' breast, looks, pushes it, and touches Laertes.....Osric grants the hit, the "palpable hit," and they are ready to play again (276).

Besides being a marvelous bit of theatrical bravado, this movement is characteristically elegant and marked with refined finesse. Booth was again and again soundly criticized for this bit of gymnastics, but he kept it for as long as he played the role (Mills, Shattuck et al). Furthermore, the business is perfectly compatible with both historically accurate smallsword play and winning competitive foil practice. Such movements are pictured in the manuscripts of Hope McBaine and the Angelos (Castle, Wise et al). In the film **Barry Lyndon** directed by Stanley Kubrick, Ryan O'Neill executes a perfect replica of the business in a decisive moment during a smallsword match. The movement is just such expected of a "slow" Hamlet.

After the King has secretly poisoned Hamlet's cup, Laertes and the Prince cross the stage once or twice again and Hamlet scores another point on Laertes. Laertes admits the hit. As the King tells the Queen, aside, not to drink of the poisoned cup, Hamlet is at the left table, handing his sword to Horatio and wiping his hands with his handkerchief. Laertes goes to the right table and anoints his sword.

Again the two meet at center and play begins. They fence with great ardor, passing swiftly back and forth across the stage, ever more vehemently. Presently Laertes stabs Hamlet in the breast. The fact that Laertes wounds Hamlet through straightforward skill and not—as most "fast" Hamlets have been wounded—through treachery, allows the slow—feminine Hamlet image Booth used to remain fully intact. He is, in other words, not a superhuman fencer, not a consummate swashbuckler. He wins the

first two bouts, not without some flourish, but Laertes is clearly able to match him. This is the moment of climax after which the whole nature of the swordplay changes and the resolution begins.

Hamlet staggers backward to the center, though not as if hurt severely. Horatio starts toward him. Hamlet straightens resolutely and drives Laertes down right and closes with him as if to replay him for his wound. Once Hamlet has Laertes in the down right stage corner their swords become caught between them. Hamlet seizes Laertes' foil, the point of it being near Laertes' breast, and wrenching it from him, with a sudden stroke drives it home. Such an exchange avoids the pitfall of a too-expert and deliberate disarm being performed upon Laertes by Hamlet. The exchange becomes almost an accident, another foul perpetrated upon the delicate Prince by a perverse Fate.

Laertes falls back, and Hamlet staggers with both blades to the center of the stage. Hamlet examines the foils, lifting them into the light, before killing the king with the poisoned blade in a very quick fit of fury. Even the fit of fury which begins the resolution phase of the scene fits and further enhances the Booth slow Hamlet characterization since it clearly evokes a Hamlet driven to violence and not deliberately pursuing a course of violent action.

Thus Edwin Booth managed to present a fully realized vision of the ideal Hamlet of the day—even in the midst of an activity which may be very far indeed from the feminine and slow which characterized that ideal. Yet, in the techniques and style Booth selected, even that activity, the crossing of, in Shakespeare's own words "fell-incense'd points," became a further crystallization and concretization of that image.

Hamlet's swordsmanship, in the staging of Booth's **Hamlet**, became a metaphor for the central delicacy, refinement and gentle introspection of the Romantic Prince. As a central and climactic element of the structure of the Booth Hamlet the duel received the careful consideration which Booth had given to every element of his production, while satisfying a public taste for a style of swordplay more familiar to actors, producers and public than the "historically accurate" rapier and dagger play. For the decades following Booth's legendary performances his "slow" model of the Danish Prince became the foundation upon which a tradition of great viability and continued vivacity flourished.

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*All **Hamlet** quotations are from: **Hamlet, Complete Study Edition**, ed. Sidney Lamb, Lincoln, Nebraska, 1965.

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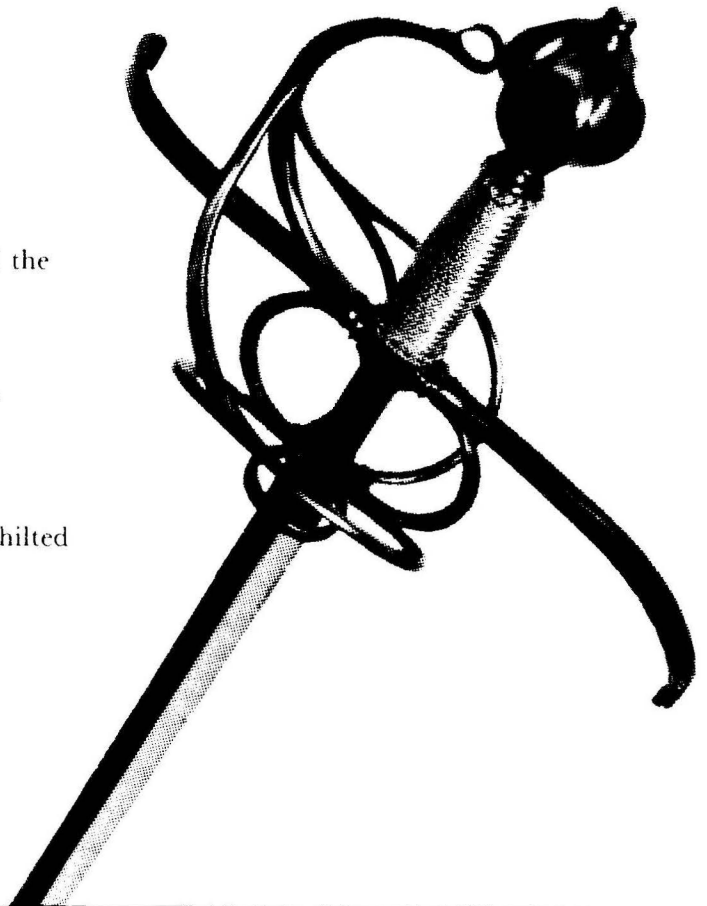
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NOTES FROM THE ELIZABETHAN SWORDPLAY MASTERS

by Craig Turner

Close reading of Di Grassi's **His True Arte of Defense**, Saviolo's **His Practice**, and Silver's **Paradoxes of Defense** reveal an Elizabethan rapier fighting style significantly different from what we usually see re-created on stage. From basic stances to attack/defense strategies, we can see that authentic rapier fight style was in many ways a much simpler and yet, perhaps more deadly personal defense than many of us have realized. I'd like to summarize briefly the conclusions of my most recent reading of these texts. Much of the information on which this article is based comes from **Methods and Practice of Elizabethan Swordplay**, (especially the last chapter "Elizabethan Swordplay Reconstructed"), authored by me and Tony Soper and soon to be published by Southern Illinois University Press.

To begin, when we carefully analyze the illustrations in these manuals we note that none of the fighters are much beyond sword length plus a small step away from each other. But this shouldn't surprise us if we remember two things: (1) the "lunge" as we know it did not exist in Shakespeare's day except for unusual, extreme situations (the passata sotto is a good example of an extreme bending of the front knee and a maximum extension of the weapon coupled with a side presentation of the torso), and (2) none of the techniques in the manuals speak of working out of easy range of the opponent. In a perverse way, for a rapier stylist to be effective against another rapier man, it was necessary to be in close enough to either execute a "stop-hit" or to perform a simultaneous parry and thrust with the weapon. In the case of rapier and dagger, distance had to be close enough so that the dagger hand might be used efficiently before the return thrust. Di Grassi and Saviolo are quite explicit on this.

Cutting, to a rapier man, meant something more like the cut of a modern saber fencer; controlled from the elbow and wrist. Swinging the arm in order to execute the cut of a rapier was out of the question. Anyone who has held a replica of a true rapier immediately realizes how useless—and for most people, physically impossible—it is to cut from the shoulder with such a weapon design. Even well-balanced rapiers (and many were not) cannot be controlled in such a move.¹

The Elizabethan masters used cuts only in addition to thrusting attacks. Since the rapier was primarily a thrusting weapon, it made more sense to incorporate cutting attacks either when a thrust was unsuccessful or in certain defensive positions. At that point, the rapier stylist might maneuver his point close enough to the opponent to execute a cut to the face or the wrist. The enlarged whoosing, slashing attacks we so frequently see in modern re-creations should be eliminated entirely if we wish historical accuracy.

If the distance between fighters was abbreviated, and if we can agree that large cutting attacks are not true to the period, then we begin to see a new fight pattern emerging. Rapier fights (at least those lasting more than a few seconds—not a situation we should assume was very common, particularly among unskilled fencers) would take on the quality of street fighting. The empty hand (in the case of single rapier) had to be held securely enough in front of the body to brush aside the opponent's thrust. A dagger in the second hand was only useful also if it was held ready in front of the body. The fighters

would face each other squarely. In addition, in our search for realism and accuracy we must also keep in mind the factor of fatigue and how that might affect the stances of rapier fighters. It is difficult to imagine a rapier fencer in the midst of a fight with an elegantly extended parrying hand, a lifted chest, and dainty footwork.

Using a standard “on guard” from Di Grassi and Saviolo, the right knee would be forward slightly, knee bent. The rapier, in the right hand, would be held just outside the right knee. If the left hand held a dagger, the left arm would be extended to the opponent’s face or chest. Using the dagger also influenced the squared-off look to the torso. It makes sense to bring the shoulder forward that would normally, with rapier alone, be held back slightly.

In considering the role of footwork in the rapier fighter’s technique, we must again ignore the modern tendency to use lunging motions. It would have been much more common in Shakespeare’s day to see fencers simply pace or run (right-left-right) at each other in attempting thrusts. In addition, Saviolo and Di Grassi go into considerable detail to list the varieties of traverses (steps to the side, perpendicular or oblique to the forward line of attack) and slips (small circular steps backward and bit to the outside with either foot, effectively removing the body of the defender from out of the line of attack). These foot movements are quintessentially Elizabethan.

I imagine this dodging, weaving, and pivoting as central to the technique of the best of the rapier fighters. Surely we would not expect fearless or frequent parries with daggers. If you have tried controlled improvisational combat with real rapiers, it is easy to understand why Di Grassi and Saviolo see parrying with daggers always accompanied by voiding maneuvers with the body. Fearless dagger parries without body voiding seem a highly romantic notion and are never recommended by the old masters.

There are a number of rapier techniques that may be impossible to re-create for stage. For instance, in every example from Di Grassi and Saviolo there is a specific understanding that the preferred technique in rapier fighting is to simultaneously parry and return thrust against the opponent. There is no hesitation or, more accurately, a separation between defense and attack. This is a crucial distinction to be made between earlier English sword fighting and the new rapier play. It is likely that such a technique in a stage fight would only be confusing to an audience. Unless of course, the counterthrust is somehow evaded. But this, it seems to me, might complicate the actor’s body balance and would certainly add to problems in blade control. As we know, there is usually greater safety in separating the attack-defense from the counter.

Circular fight patterns must have been common with skilled rapier specialists. Aside from producing slight changes in distance between fighters, such tactics would also momentarily open lines of attack. Adding daggers or cloaks to this basic pattern would add enormously to the sense of sudden appearances and voids. We can visualize the daggers and cloaks, when seen from above, in the center of two circling fighters. I wish to repeat here, that Elizabethan fighters gave the appearance of being connected to each other by a tube-like space, through which the action would progress. Given the emphasis on the thrust, there was very little movement with weapons or bodies that would occur outside this space.

I believe it is easy to over-choreograph a rapier fight for the stage. A rapier specialist’s interest was in getting the one good thrust in; the number of thrusts would be quite limited. Of course, if we are speaking of amateurs or emotionally-charged characters, then over—thrusting would be a logical

choreographic choice. But remembering the point made above, about the virtual impossibility of “twiddling” a rapier blade in and around the opponent’s blade, it appears that an authentic rapier fight would be a much more deliberate thrusting affair, relying on hair’s breath body voids for most escapes.

If the number of thrusts is reduced, and if the weapons being used are authentic, I suspect that a rapier fight would be considerably slower than what we often see in Shakespearean productions. I believe this is another indirect effect of the “Errol Flynn” myth: that blazing speed is necessary to achieve dramatic intensity. Perhaps, some day, we’ll see a fight between Tybalt and Mercutio consisting of perhaps a dozen thrusts, artistically timed, phrased, and built in such a way that intensity comes from a deeper reservoir than clever choreography.

Other sources from the period add nuances to our understanding of the context in which rapier play flourished. For example, modern statistical studies suggest that there were more killings resulting from personal quarrels than there were from planned murders.² London doubled in size between 1580 and 1600 to around a population of two hundred thousand, an enormous number considering the infrastructure of streets and waste disposal.³ Rapier play’s popularity was prompted by the increasingly unstable political/social climate that left the average man on his own when it came to defending life and property. A man could be involuntarily “pressed” into military service or challenged to a duel. Catholic and Protestant sympathizers struggled back and forth for political power, not only in England, but also in many countries on the continent.

Rocco Bonetti was deeply involved in political intrigue, both before and during his career as a rapier teacher.⁴ Although complete records are not available, virtually every rapier teacher of note in England was involved at some level with the aristocracy through direct patronage or influence at court. Rapier play was not only dangerous to physical health, it carried political overtones as well. The popularity of dueling only exacerbated the new weapons use. All of these factors only increased the traditional English distrust of the foreign-inspired weapon. That distrust is mirrored in much of Shakespeare’s references to the rapier.

An additional element I find fascinating in this period is the growing interest in the scientific analysis of phenomena. The growing popularity of fencing manuals and fencing teachers was in large part due to the new Renaissance idea that one might analyze and break down events into discrete elements. Military strategy in this period also developed a much more tough-minded approach to the use of men and machinery; this is the time when gunpowder came to dominate the thinking of theorists, almost entirely replacing the earlier reliance on swords. The evidence we have analyzed indicates that the rapier specialists used this new hunger for knowledge as a way to popularize their ideas.

Many of the ideas we came across in our research were surprising. Often it is too easy to mix elements of later short sword play with the Elizabethan. Re-reading the texts that are left us should provide a source of new inspiration to scholars and choreographers.

FOOTNOTES

1. In the twelfth or thirteenth year of Elizabeth's reign (1570 or 1571) long tucks and long rapiers" became quite fashionable "and he was held the greatest gallant that had the deepest ruff and the longest Rapier. The offence to the eye of one, and the hurt that came...by the other caused Her Majesty to make proclamation against them both, and to place selected grave citizens at every gate, to cut the ruffs and break the Rapier's points of all passengers that exceeded a year in length of their rapiers..." (Robert E. Morseberger, "Swordplay and the Elizabethan and Jacobean Stage." **Salzburg Studies in Elizabethan Literature**, edited by James Hogg. 37 (1974: 13.) It seems reasonable to assume many amateur fencers of the time were caught up in the long blade craze.
2. See especially Joyce Youings, "Rebellion, Commotions, Lawbreaking and Litigation." in **Sixteenth Century England**. London: Allen Lane, 1984.
3. E.A. Wrigley and R. S. Schofield, **The Population History of England, 1541-1871: a reconstruction**. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1981.
4. See especially Linda McCollum's article, "Rocco Bonetti." **The Fight Master: Journal of the Society of American Fight Directors** 9 (May 1986): 13-17.

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HOW TO TEACH STAGE COMBAT TO MARTIAL ARTISTS

by T. J. GLENN

Some years ago I had the frustrating experience of working for a fight choreographer whose view of Eastern combat arts was “That Eastern bull____.” The problem with this attitude was that he was choreographing a show which had as its main plot point a fight between a bareknuckle boxer and a karate expert.

Needless to say, his concept of a karate punch was laughably misinformed and his nature was such that unasked for advice was not welcome. He used some circus flips, a few grunts, and some poses he’d seen in commercials for Bruce Lee movies and decided he’d done a good job.

To a certain extent he had; no one was hurt, the actors played it well, and dramatically it worked for most of the audience who “didn’t know or care.” But the rest (myself included) were left unsatisfied by the western/chop-saki mix. And by our own standards(to promote safe and aesthetically pleasing fights) he had failed.

Today, a lot more of that audience would be unsatisfied because a lot more of them DO know better. I counted twelve magazines on the newsstand down the block with karate/kunfu/ninja in their title and half a dozen more devoted at least in part to hand-to-hand combat.

Increased audience awareness, coupled with the increasing number of martial arts/cross over movies (**Karate Kid**, **Roadhouse**, **Lethal Weapon**; any Chuck Norris, Sho Kosugi, and the rash of martial arts T.V., **The Master**, **Sidericks**), means the fight director for stage has got to keep pace with public knowledge or his/her fights loose credibility.

In another instance, I was assisting at a Renaissance Faire audition. Several karate artists were among the “call backs” sent to us directly by the director, who, a karate practitioner himself (and a man with little or no understanding of theatre in general or stage combat in particular) decided they would be perfect for our fight call.

The fighters turned out to be completely unfamiliar with the concept of choreographed fighters and one of them even took out a flourescent light with a quarterstaff (he was an expert with the six foot Japanes bo staff, but the eight foot quarterstaff confused him—he wasn’t bright).

Needless to say since we had a say in casting, these karate artists were not hired. But it was indicative of a lot of miscommunication between the theatrical world and the martial one. Many choreographers, because of incidents like this one will as a matter of course automatically discard any resume with karate or Kunfu on it, which is understandable but unfortunate, because a valuable resource is being wasted. These two stories illustrate the dichotomies facing us fight directors.

Vietnam era plays and films are coming out of the woodwork now so you can expect Eastern style violence and more actors who are selected by directors either out of lack of education as to what stage combat is or out of a desire for authenticity.

We have to not only be able to teach non-martial artists how to look good but also to learn to work with actual martial artists. Much of what follows also applies to boxers or competition fencers, but most of the S.A.F.D. members I've met have a basic understanding of these forms and often experience with them as well, so I'll concentrate in this article on filling in some of the gap in knowledge about both the Eastern artists and their various forms of combat.

Most Fight Directors (short of working with an S.A.F.D. trained actor) would give their eye teeth to have a dancer as Tybalt or Laertes. We accept that we'll have to pervert some of their tendencies (i.e. to stay up rather than stay in a low crouch, to turn too tight). But we know we can use much of their training to our advantage. Well, if we acknowledge that we are an offshoot of a martial tradition as much as a theatrical one (keeping in mind that Ralph Faulkner was a firm believer that stage fighting/theatrical fencing did not exist—you simply were choreographing a real and logical bout), then we can relate directly to martial trained performers as long as we figure out a common language first.

The first trick in communication is not to tell the martial artist that what he (or she) does is wrong but rather to use what they do—but alter it subtly. For instance, when a martial artist (even a so called hard stylist like Okinawa-te or Shoto Kan) throws a punch in real combat, he is relaxed, only tensing his muscles, locking them into a rigid powerstrike at the moment of impact, thus focusing all the force on the blow at point of impact. This is why arts like karate seem to strike stiff poses after a hit.

For stage combat we can use that. We just have to make the moment of focus occur ARTIFICIALLY with dynamic tension rather than at the point of impact. This gives us the same frozen muscles bulging pose, but no dangerous power is expended until after the punch has completed movement.

Of course we must not let the fist connect in the first place. That can be done by extending the body area (mentally) of the “victim” so that the inertia of the punch or kick is spent by a momentary complete stop of the fist (foot), four or five inches (film) or seven or eight inches (stage), away from the body and only then moving the fist in closer as an after thought.

This area of safety may seem like a basic concept to a fight director, but to someone trained to take blows and ride with them it seems enormously artificial and contrived, and it is up to the fight director to explain the illusions he is seeking to create. If you are dealing with a martial artist of limited acting experience, it may also be necessary to explain how to physically react.

Even an expert on what a real blow will do to a human body may never have given thought on how to simulate that phenomena. The concept of the isolation of body parts and of naturalistically miming injury may require some explaining. Approach it as you would with any beginning actor but with the one caveat that you acknowledge the martial artist's real knowledge, and present your information as a supplement to his. Diplomacy!

Another concept basic to our understanding of choreographed violence, that of throwing energy past the “victim” rather than at him, will be new to the martial artist though energy projection (i.e. directing or throwing “chi” or “ki”) is not a new one. All that has to be done is to have the martial artist deflect the projection to that invisible barrier around the “victim.”

While we are mentioning Chi, it is important to remind our prospective stunt fighters that no internal focusing of energy is necessary for stage fighting beyond a normal mental process of

preparation. Anyone who has seen a martial artist prepare for a sparring match will realize the intense concentration and ability these people have to call on extraordinary adrenaline reserves in non-panic situations. I personally don't want to be hit by a hand that can shatter a two-by-four. So keep them surface.

And don't let involuntary muscle response take over. Reacting in a real fight faster than thought is a martial artist's survival—so most are trained to respond automatically. Even a very intelligent, well-meaning martial artist may, if nervous, rushed, or tired, go automatic unless the choreography is wide, well rehearsed and has built in breathing spaces.

Usually when we deal with actors, the very strangeness of what we are teaching them will assuage any major ego problems they have. We are the “out of town expert.” Not so with martial artists.

I have a black belt friend who came to watch a certification fight. When he was introduced to several people he was asked if he “did this(stage combat), too.” His answer was “Nope, I do it for real.” And he was right.

Even though he knows nothing about swordplay, I've often had him sit in on my choreographing sessions because he can always spot weak sequences. When asked what's wrong with it, he invariably replies “It doesn't feel right.” So I go back over it and find the illogical move. Maestro Faulkner's point again—logical and illogical fight moves.

All this adds up to one thing—even in an art not their own (i.e. fencing, quarterstaff), a martial artist/actor will have strong feelings about the moves “put on” him. The Fight Director might have to justify a given move or a fight concept to this type of performer. I usually start (after finding out what style they study) by asking “What's your flashiest technique?” I see if I can use it, or some variation, explaining that his most effective technique is probably too fast, small, or complex for the audience to see, much less understand. I try never to “put a fight on” a skilled fighter or fencer. Rather I try to create a fight with them. The practice of some choreographers to walk in with the fight on paper may save them time, but it can only lead to bland, unexciting work over a period of time as you exhaust your own fight lexicon. Besides, people are not machines that can be plugged into a fight. Not only does this utilize their talents to the fullest—ultimately making me look better—but it also gives them a sense of participation which saves later problems.

These later problems are exemplified by this tale:

In the original production of *Cyrano de Bergerac*, the actor whom Cyrano was written for was an excellent fencer. He in turn hired his fencing master for the part of Valvert so the poem/duel would be spectacular. They rehearsed for weeks.

Opening night the fight was truly splendid—until the end of the couplet when Cyrano attempted to thrust home; Valvert parried the thrust! Cyrano tried again and was again parried.

This went on for some time until Cyrano fenced him into the wings and asked “Why didn't you let me kill you like we rehearsed?”

“There are other maestros in the audience,” said Valvert, “I can not look like a fool.”

Cyrano grabbed the other's sword, clanged it against his, then stepped back on stage alone to declare "It is done."

You laugh! But I've known it to happen, both in fist fights and sword fights. Suddenly your fight partner parries harder or sticks in an extra cut or two to show off to some friends. True, most actors lose fights all the time (on stage) and have no problem with it since, win or lose, they are doing their job. But (in an odd sort of way) a martial artist's job is to win fights, or at least look good losing. And if you have not given them a chance to participate in the creation of the fight so they can justify their loss to themselves, it could get hairy. (But then actors can pull the same behavioral problems and some unique ones of their own).

There are some out and out advantages of using Martial Artist thought:

In terms of choreographic memory, martial artists of above black belt rank have a built in advantage. They must memorize a complicated series of prechoreographed moves called "kata" which are combat forms practiced solo against imaginary combatants, or in some schools, against another real individual who is also following a preset series of moves. All forms are preset and the blows are "pulled." In other words, it is a form of staged combat! (All that's needed is to add the acting and the safety cues in—work, but not impossible). This is the major step to getting your fight across to martial artists—explain that you are simply designing a Kata for a purpose—to tell a particular story.

Another built in benefit you can accrue from your martial artist is (or at least should be) flexibility; also agility, a keen mental alertness (for the most part), and the discipline of a ballet dancer for those in the arts work hard and seldom object to "just one more time" forty or fifty times in a row.

As for the one great beast we all face, stage fright, you're on your own. Percentage wise, martial artists probably throw up before a show as much as anyone else.

Reviews

Conquistador Aisle

Conquistador Aisle is the name of a section of the Colorado River in the Grand Canyon where this witty new play by Cathline Huber takes place. Four people are trapped by flooding waters on a ledge above the river and confront their prejudices, fears, and the ghost of Sir Francis Drake. Really!

It's a delightful evening of theatre for a layman, and for a fight director even more so.

Ms. Huber was a stage combat student of mine for a short time (a good one, too), as well as a talented actress. So when she wrote the fight scene at the first act climax, she created the perfect fight certification scene: funny, dramatic, and with quarterstaff, rapier and dagger, unarmed and net and trident written into the script !

Given that ideal situation, Ralph Anderson could have choreographed an adequate fight that fit the script and come out looking fine. Well some people can't leave well enough alone; Ralph went ahead and choreographed a humdinger!

The fight starts with the English tour guide, played by Michael Loudon (who praises the hearty spirit of America and thinks the Brits are milksops), and the American college student, played by Robin Haynes (who thinks America has no class and envies the British). And argument escalates and they decide only fighting will solve anything.

Since the characters both have done some acting and stage combat, they decide to fight a mock duel with oars as rapiers and cooking knives as daggers. The mock duel escalates into a real one and our protagonists shift to quarterstaff, then

to cargo net and cooking fork (net and trident) against pot lid and steak knife (shield and gladius) in a hilarious (yet at the same time harrowing) Pseudo-Spartacus battle.

It ends with a vicious, non-romanticized fist fight where the young American is pounded insensible.

The space was well used by the combatants, the cuing was fairly precise, and the targeting was good. Only once was a knap missed. I never once feared for the actors' safety, but was worried for the characters, as should be. The kicking of some cook pots at a dramatic moment was well timed noise (though Ralph later told me the pots weren't supposed to fly quite as much as they did).

A moment of tension could have come during the quarterstaff fight when one of the staves broke during a bind-over, but to their credit, both men continued the fight so smoothly it might just as well have been a breakaway.

Ralph Anderson did a superb job on this one, assisted by Robert Tuftee. Nicholas Sandy had apparently been cast in one of the roles, begun work, and then had been hired (this was a showcase) out of town for real bread, so Ralph stepped in to re-choreograph the piece. And he had a whole week and a half to do it!

Bravo, Ralph!

T. J. Glenn

A View From The Bridge

The Alley Theatre's production of Arthur Miller's **A View From the Bridge** toured to UNLV on April 13th. The production was directed by Beth Sanford with fights staged by Brandon Smith who originally played Marco in the production but had just left the company prior to the UNLV performance.

There are three moments of physical action in the play: Eddie teaching Rudolpho to fight, the battle to kiss, and the suicide/murder.

The scene where Eddie tries to provoke the effeminate Rudolpho into fighting by showing him some moves was intense, but brief, ending in Rudolpho's hitting Eddie. There was a nice use of the stage space in this unit set and believable responses of concern from the others in the room when the encounter occurs.

The battle to kiss built up nicely in intensity. Eddie grabbed Cathleen with both hands and kissed her on the mouth. In her struggle to free herself, she fell to the floor when Eddie turned to go after Rudolpho. Eddie held Rudolpho immobile in an armlock which allowed him to give him a prolonged kiss on the mouth. Rudolpho's inability to struggle to get free left the question as to whether he was trying to free himself of Eddie's embrace at all. Cathleen jumped up and while screaming at Eddie pulled madly at his hair. This was a concise moment revealing the build up of tensions and emotions out of control.

The final moment of staged physical violence was the stabbing down center of Eddie by Marco. This moment is necessarily brief since Eddie is "dead" before he even leaves the house and the murder/suicide is just the physical manifestation of the fact. Unfortunately this moment was the weakest of the three fights, primarily due to not masking the stabbing.

Eddie's knife came out of nowhere, and it looked like a paring knife. He pointed the knife at Marco but not in a threatening manner. Marco simply grabbed Eddie's forearm and bent the knife back into Eddie. Since none of this was masked, the audience saw the blade laid flat on Eddie's abdomen and his down stage hand take hold of the handle to hold it in place once Marco released. It would have been so simple to have Marco step in front of Eddie during the struggle with the knife in order to mask the insertion of the blade.

This lack of believability was even more surprising since the actor playing Eddie was wearing padding all through the show even though he was a large man who did not need it to increase his size. It would appear that he was wearing a stomach plate but it obviously was not used.

The violence was appropriately understated in this psychological drama. The emphasis was kept on the most important conflict in the play which is between Eddie and his niece Catherine.

In actuality the most violent moment in the play was in the last act, prior to the suicide/death, when Eddie in the confusion of his emotional rage momentarily raised his hand in anger to strike Cathleen. Sometimes the most violent moments in a play are the suggestions of violence and not the act itself.

Linda McCollum

Swordplay

Rod Colbin revived his show **Swordplay** at the Lucille Lortels White Barn Theatre in Westport Connecticut August 5th, 6th and 7th of last year. Colbin dueled with four male cast members (Edward Baran, Stuart Ferriday, Adam Gavzer and Harold Wesson) as well as playing host and lecturer in this unusual marriage of fencing documentary, demonstration and theatre.

The show starts out with a lecture-style demonstration on modern competitive fencing and then moves quickly on into more fascinating aspects with Colbin informally tracing the evolution of dueling and the development of the sword. The show included the ceremony and obligations of knighthood with Colbin enacting a knight's preparation for a tournament. **Swordplay** also included the re-creation of several famous theatrical battles including the rapier and

dagger duel in **Romeo and Juliet**, and the Bal-lade Duel from **Cyrano De Bergerac**, and the death of **Macbeth**.

One of the most hilarious scenes was when Colbin and another actor demonstrated the choreography of a swordfight step by step and then enacted the same choreography in the style of ballet, opera, a restoration play, a Japanese drama and a disco-style fight scene.

Colbin's fight scenes are where his skill, sophistication, wit and imagination all come together.

Swordplay received outstanding reviews in Westport and was referred to as a kind of intellectual entertainment which provided a night to remember.

From Chicago

Swashbucklers abounded in the Chicago area during the end of the winter and early spring, with **The Rover** at the Goodman Theatre, **Three Musketeers** at the Absolute Theatre and the University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana, and **Bloody Bess** at Columbia College.

The Rover at the Goodman Theatre is a Restoration comedy by Aphra Behn, one of the first female playwrights. A grand and silly tale of three women who seek to defy their brother by going out in search of men during carnival, it is set in a Spanish colony in the Caribbean in 1665. The three Spanish ladies are commanded by their brother, Don Pedro, to remain inside while he goes out to enjoy himself. Meanwhile, four Englishmen are in town to avail themselves of a good time. One sister (Florinda) is in love with one of the Englishmen (Belville), one sister is to become a nun, and the other is bookish and out for some fun. The English are out for a good time, save Belville who must meet with Florinda and marry her.

In addition to this story line, there is a high priced whore who everyone wants. Don Pedro intends to marry Florinda to his friend Don Antonio, and the buffoon Blunt is a silly ass ready to be gulled into losing his money. The Rover is an Englishman who goes after anything in a skirt, mainly the whore and the sister bound to become a nun. Fights break out at two major places in the play, though slapstick is in place throughout. The first fracas is between the four Englishmen and four Spaniards. The English have shot down the portrait of the whore whom they desire but cannot afford. The second is a duel of honor between Don Pedro and Belville (who is in disguise as Don Antonio). Sidebar action is the mugging of Blunt and the taking of his clothes and money.

The Rover was directed by Kyle Donnelly with fights by Michael Sokoloff. I attended ready to be enthralled by the action sequences but was, unfortunately, disappointed. Our swashbucklers were costumed grandly (on a LORT scale) with the weapons by Dennis Graves. The choreography of the melee and the duel were very nice with good pictures and flow, but the performances of them left much to be desired. The action could be "counted" and was danced more than fought. The fighters were untrained prior to the production with the exception of Ray Chapman (the only SAFD Certified fighter) and Henry Godines (Belville) and Peter Rybolt (Don Antonio). The lack of "going for it" made the fights anti-climactic and silly instead of the fights for honor that they should have been. The incidental slapstick of the mugging and other fall downs were inexpertly performed with bad knaps. In general, the swashbuckling lacked Za! and the women overwhelmed the men in performances.

The Three Musketeers was performed at the Absolute Theatre Company in the Organic Theatre space. This was a new adaptation by David Ruckerman which was developed over an eight month rehearsal period and performed on two consecutive nights (a la **Nicholas Nickleby**). The first part "Call to Adventure" pertained to

the arrival of D'Artagnan in Paris and his adventures with Madame Bonacieux and the Queen's diamond tags. Part II, "Milady De Winter," followed the tale of D'Artagnan. This was a bold effort on the part of a non-equity theatre and had great possibilities. **Three Musketeers** was directed by Warner Crocker with fights by Charles Coyl. Designed and built on a small budget, this version was performed on a huge set which took up a third of the Organic Theatre space on a diagonal, with three separate levels, a grand bridge, and a huge stone staircase. Unfortunately its size left some of the action too far away from the audience, but there was plenty to see down front. Mr. Coyl's choreography was played with great Za!, but at times the action was so full that it became unfocused. The melees were simply done with mostly two-fights happening all over simultaneously. S. A. F. D. certified actor/combatants were Gary Boeck (Fight Captain, Bicaret), Ned Mochel (the Stranger), and Bruce D. Orendorf (Athos). It was evident that the fighters had been trained well by Mr. Coyl over the rehearsal period. Outstanding performances were given by Mr. Boeck, Geoff Callaway (Porthos), Frank Nall (Rochefort), Christopher Walz (Cahusac, De Wardes, Felton), and Lisa Ann Tejero (Milady).

The fights were performed with a nice variety of Armory weapons, but the tips were a bit erratic and blades a bit heavy. My favorite melees were the D'Artagnan and Musketeers versus the Cardinal's guard in Part I and the Rochefort versus D'Artagnan duel as well as the melee between the Musketeers and the English in Part II. Milady did some outstanding unarmed and dagger work and delivered the best knaps of the evening.

The production as a whole was ponderous and slow moving for an action adventure, with far too much dialogue and narration (both parts combined took six and a half hours). This was a **Three Musketeers** that took itself too seriously. But still, congratulations for a bold attempt and grand commitment to an idea are to be given to the Absolute Theatre Company.

The Three Musketeers was also performed at the Illinois Repertory Theatre, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. This adaptation by William Martin of Alexandre Dumas' novel was directed by William Martin with the fights by Dr. Robin McFarquhar.

This was the swashbuckler of the season! Done in three hours and fifteen minutes with two intermissions, this version of the Musketeers was grand, opulent, and full of Za! Performed in a beautiful space, all the designers went to town to great effect. The costumes, sets, lights, sound and props were all first rate. The stage contained a huge revolve with a two story square that had moveable stair units to change its configurations, and they used all the configurations they could think of. The action was fast-paced and boldly done. The fighting was extremely good. Tips were low and light as a feather. Outstanding performances were by Andrew Miller (D'Artagnan), Matt Kozlowski (D'Artagnan's Father), Kenneth R. Merckx, Jr. (Athos, Fight Captain), Greg Dolph (Porthos, Fight Captain), Scott Cummins (Jussac), Rafer Weigel (Biscaret), and Michael Goldberg (Cahusac). Kudos also to Anne Marie Tremko (Milady), David Knight (the Cardinal), and the best Louis I've had the pleasure to watch, Ted Lesley. As you can see, I thoroughly enjoyed this show from beginning to end. The best fights were Athos and the four guards with rapier and dagger on a revolving stage and the final battle between the musketeers and Rochefort and his men on and off the revolve while it was moving with tons of smoke pouring out and fighting everywhere. It was great! Let me not forget David Clements (Rochefort) a very big, very scary Rochefort and a terrific fighter.

I could go on all day about this show. Let it suffice that this was the best swashbuckler in the area, and it didn't miss a trick. Congratulations to Robin on a job well-done and to a cast that worked very well. If you want to do **The Three Musketeers**, this is the adaptation to use.

Bloody Bess at Columbia College of Chicago is a tale of piracy and revenge by William Norris and John Ostrander. This is a great fight show first done by the Organic Theatre in Chicago (with fights by Maestro Martinez). Pirates take a merchant ship bound for Tortuga. There is no loot, but there is a beautiful girl, Elizabeth Presberty. Our pirate captain, Levoisseur, decides to ransom her to her father instead of ravishing her, much to the consternation of his crew. When he fails to return from the bargaining, Bess makes her escape while the crew argues over what to do. Her savior on ship board is the pirate Annie Bailey. The man she runs to for help turns out to be more evil than the pirates. He forces her to marry him and she is rescued by the pirates at a battle in the church. She vows revenge, takes over as the pirate captain (fighting to win the position) and proceeds to wreak havoc on her "husband." They meet in a final battle where everybody dies except Bess who is captured and hung. Great fun!

Directed by Ivory Ocean with fights by Roland Meyer and Frank Dominelli and faculty advisor David Woolley (read this review with a grain of salt), **Bloody Bess** was a rollicking good time. Out of the cast of eighteen, there were nine S. A. F. D. certified actor/combatants and the rest were students of Mr. Woolley's. There were a variety of weapons, some Armory, some Rod Casteel, and some found in antique shops in the area. The melees and duels were well done, though the pictures sometimes overlapped each other and one didn't know where to look. Distances were surprisingly well maintained, though tips got high at times and the students' adrenaline sometimes carried them away with heaviness. Congratulations to all for a safe and exciting show.

David Woolley

Cymbeline at the Public and **Playboy of the West Indies** at Yale Rep

These productions show two working sides of the same fight choreographer, David Leong. The first required him to be inventive and flashy in using a large space, and the other desperately needed to keep the audience alive and confined to an extremely small space, demanding clean crisp safety.

Cymbeline at the Public Theatre under the direction of Jo Anne Akalaitis was a visually and aurally stunning production of a rather silly play. The setting was moved to Victorian England amidst Celtic ruins. George Tsypin used photographic projections by Stephanie Rudolph to create a surrealistic setting in greys and sepia tones with splashes of color in the costumes by Ann Hould-Ward. The set consisted of two four sided columns used as periaktoi that revolved to create different locations along with the projections on the painted back wall. A trough-like creek was up center with an arched bridge crossing it, and a ramp up left gave height to an otherwise flat acting area and allowed for variety in the entrances and exits. Other surrealistic use of entrances involved having the Cymbeline flown in from stage right on his throne and Jupiter as a young boy flying in on a raven.

The battle of the Romans and the Britons at the top of the fifth act creates a number of problems for the fight choreographer. First of all, the Victorian setting would have required the use of guns if staged realistically. Secondly, a great deal of information must be conveyed during the course of the battle. We must see the Romans and Britons fight. We must see the Romans winning. We must see Jachimo and Posthumus meet and Jachimo not recognize Posthumus. Cymbeline must be captured by the Romans. The "cave boys" must come to the rescue along with Posthumus. The Romans must be defeated and Cymbeline rescued. A lot of "story-telling" must occur in this battle and seldom is this done successfully.

David Leong's solution to this problem was to take a stylized surrealistic approach to communicating a sense of war and, without using weapons, created the idea of battle through the use of emotional imagery, which was in keeping with the photographic concept of this production. Using only twenty-two actors, David was able to fill this stage with action and keep the story line clearly flowing.

By using tableaux that froze the action of the battle, he created the sense of elapsed time and different locations. He kept two groups moving in circular patterns on either side of the stage, and the costuming clearly revealed who were the Britons and who were the Romans. Near the climax of the battle, Posthumous, disguised as a peasant, rode in atop a catapult-like machine (which had been the ramp upstage left during the first half of the play) that cut diagonally across the space. This stop action technique allowed Leong to use the actors as generic bodies that could be used over and over in the different scenes. As each new scene was illuminated, the actors would go into motion. Some of the action was in slow motion, with actors having incredible control of their body movement while dying, being wounded and attacking in slow motion. There were a couple of gruesome moments when a soldier was struck in the eye with a staff and another was run through from below the catapult-machine. While at first seeming to be too graphic for this fairy-tale like atmosphere, on reflection, this brutality was in keeping with the kind of gory detail we all relished in fairy tales.

The Jachimo/Posthumus fight was done at a realistic speed with the surrounding action in slow motion. David used an unusual concept in the staging of this fight. It consisted of a knife fight (one of the few weapons on stage) using a single knife with neither combatant letting go of the knife.

In the battle scenes, the Phillip Glass music, which underscored most of the produc-

tion, created a sense of anxiety which enhanced the emotional imagery that Leong had created through movement.

There was some nice work by the "cave boys." Guiderius (Polydore) and Arviragus (Cadwal), in their naked savagery as they leapt over the creek smashing their spear/staffs together, moved well.

A disheartening moment involving weaponry was the handling of the knife by Imogen. The knife gave Pisanio and Imogen a much needed point of conflict in the scene where Imogen begs Pisanio to kill her. Imogen's handling of the knife with her tightly wrapped fingers clutching the blade destroyed the moment. Cymbeline also seemed uncomfortable handling the ceremonial sword and scabbard, while Cloten's clumsiness may be attributed to his character portrayal. But his handling of the blade that we are to later believe cut off his head ruined the illusion.

This production was truly a collaborative artistic effort that complimented each artist's work. It is a sad commentary on the state of our professional theatre when only three of the actors on stage had the clean diction so necessary in Shakespeare. This inadequacy tragically flawed an otherwise exceptional production.

Mustapha Matura's **Playboy of the West Indies** at Yale Rep created the opposite kind of problems for the fight director. Michael Yeargan's setting of a small rum shack in Trinidad was on a raked stage fifteen by fifteen feet. Here was an instance where the set did not serve the play. On this small stage were two round tables, four chairs, two stools, a bar, sink, crates and rice bags on the floor as well as five people when the fight broke out. You knew from the moment you saw the set that this fight sequence would have to carefully choreographed or someone would get hurt.

The initial fight sequence has the father bursting into the shack swinging a staff, which

causes several of the five people on stage at this moment to have to duck. This sequence had you on the edge of your seat as David Leong's work has the stage full of people all involved in the fight in some way. One moment has the father and son in their struggle smashing into one of the on-lookers pinning him against the door jam, which caused even more screaming and confusion in the crowd. There was no knap on one of the blows to the stomach with the staff and little force behind the swing. There was a nice grab from behind with a neck lock that resulted in a believable struggle.

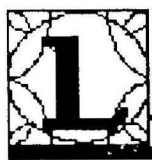
A later sequence with the knife/machete was poorly timed and well out of distance. The swipe to the stomach, done parallel to the audience, masked nothing and showed just how far out of distance the two combatants were. The son's lunging at the door with the knife was well after the father had left the door.

David also used the large window up center for some exciting business as the crowd bolts out of the rum shack and down the beach.

There was also some nice work with a rope as the 'Playboy' is captured from behind. He struggles with his two assailants while having a rope around his shoulders. Peggy sneaks up to get him around the neck in a very convincing piece of business. The body language of the assailants communicated tension and struggle but the rope was of such a small diameter one wondered if it could even hold under such tension.

The acting in this rather talky play was very mannered. The fight sequence in the third act was the only exciting moment in the play and much needed. David Leong worked well with some inexperienced actors although the lead, Kevin Jackson, moved quite well.

Linda McCollum



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

In response to your requests for members input I would like to suggest that the SAFD expand its clinic program to all the regions of the country in the form of short clinics.

Personally I like your national format; however, the summer months are very busy, and it is not possible to take two weeks or four weeks off to come to the national camp. I'm sure many other members have the same problem. Weekend camps held year round in various areas of the country taking perhaps the form of specialty sessions, one weapon or aspect of the stage combat genre, with one or two instructors, might well promote increased member activity.

Sincerely,
Robert Scranton

*Richard McLeod, a dancer with the Atlanta Ballet, was accidentally stabbed and his lung punctured when the protective board under his costume slipped during a fight scene in **Romeo and Juliet**. The following letter is in response to this incident.*

It is so hard for me to believe that professionals in sister fields would take such foolish, if not downright stupid, chances with the life and safety of a performer.

Are organizations such as the Atlanta Ballet unaware that a group exists to promote safety and provide choreography and instruction in Stage Combat, or is it the concern that to utilize the skills of a fight professional might cost too much that allows such a life-threatening incident to occur?

Robert W. Albright

POINTS OF INTEREST

BRANDEIS UNIVERSITY

In early February I had the pleasure of traveling to Brandeis University in Boston to adjudicate a class of students taught this year by David Woolley. The students are members of the Professional Actor Training Program at Brandeis and had been working on the basics of certification for some time, with David going in this year to complete their training. Congratulations to Guiedo for bringing them to a very solid place in terms of their development and for a successful class for the most part. Generally speaking the students were well prepared and carried off their tasks most convincingly. A couple of pairs were very close but just didn't have that spark of realism that is required to put them over the edge of passing. They are, however, very committed to the work and all will test again in the future I feel sure. Of particular note was a scene by Michael Gunst and John Elsen which was as "tooth and nail" realistic as I think I have seen. Again, congratulations to all that took the classes and to David for a job well done. Those that passed using Rapier and Dagger, Quarterstaff and Unarmed were:

Recommended:

John Elsen
Michael Gunst

Passed:

Barry Abramowitz
Leif Olson
Paul Carlin
Mark Di Pietro
Doug Richards
Mark Hartfield
Andrew Eisenman.

Instructor: **David Woolley**
Adjudicator: **Drew Fracher**

TEMPLE UNIVERSITY

On April 7, I had the pleasure of adjudicating Payson Burt's certification class in Philadelphia. The culmination of a three year training program at Temple University, the test was a success for everyone involved.

All the fighters showed excellent technique and blade control. However, it is important to realize that speed is not the ultimate objective. All those testing (and this was most evident in the Rapier/Dagger section) needed to take more time to show character and tell the story. Internal phrasing in the fights was lost in the push to go as fast as possible.

A special commendation goes to James Myers and Andrew Powdermakers for a particularly effective performance of a very brutal unarmed fight.

James Myers

Passed: Rapier & Dagger
Recommended:
Unarmed
Quarterstaff

Andrew Powdermaker

Passed: Rapier & Dagger
Recommended:
Unarmed
Quarterstaff

Alexander Wells

Passed: Rapier & Dagger
Unarmed
Quarterstaff

Bill Eissler

Passed: Rapier & Dagger
Unarmed
Quarterstaff

Michael Sandels

Passed: Rapier & Dagger
Unarmed
Recommended:
Quarterstaff

Christopher Wolfe

Passed: Rapier & Dagger
Unarmed

Recommended:
Quarterstaff

Instructor: **Payson H. Burt**
Adjudicator: **Richard Raether**

RALPH ANDERSON PRIVATE CLASS

On the evening of April 23rd, I adjudicated Ralph Anderson's private students in New York at the Dan Waggoner Studios. All of the students exhibited a good knowledge of basics, safety and style, and I was pleased to pass all of them. They all seem committed to further study and all joined the Society as members as well. Well done, Ralph!

The following passed the certification test in Rapier and Dagger, Unarmed and Quarterstaff.

Deborah Higgins
Neil Fishman
Monty Bonnell
Marcella Paraskevas

Certified Teacher: **Ralph Anderson**
Adjudicator: **J. Allen Suddeth**

I recently had the opportunity to adjudicate six fight tests in a whirlwind tour of the midwest. I was especially pleased to note that for three of the schools I visited (Purdue, Memphis State and the University of Missouri-Kansas City) this was the first ever certification fight test. Here's hoping that these schools will support their stage combat programs so that this test can be a regular event.

Congratulations go to all six instructors for solid training. Let me again encourage those teachers not yet certified to attend the teacher certification workshop or make an application by mail. The teacher certification is a vital part of the S.A.F.D. and is the only way the Society can endorse or promote its instructors.

Kudos to the newly certified Actor/Combatants for some imaginative and well-executed scenes.

NEW YORK CITY May 2nd:

Todd Loweth
Recommended:
Rapier and Dagger
Passed:
Unarmed
Broadsword

Jeni Breen
Passed:
Rapier and Dagger
Unarmed
Broadsword

Dan Williams
Passed:
Rapier and Dagger
Unarmed
Broadsword

Anthony Ejarque
Passed:
Rapier and Dagger
Unarmed
Broadsword

Instructor: **Todd Loweth**
Adjudicator: **Richard Raether**

PURDUE UNIVERSITY May 3rd:

Those passing in Rapier and Dagger, Unarmed and Quarterstaff were as follows:

Jane Purse
Hollis Smurthwaite
Glenn Bugala
Ken Dabrowski
Antony Pounders
Brian Williams
Phil Timberlake
Jon Rice

Best of luck to Bob Walsh and Brian Williams
this summer with the **Battle of Tippicanoe.**

Instructor: **Bob Walsh**

Adjudicator: **Richard Raether**

MEMPHIS STATE UNIVERSITY

May 4th:

Those passing in Rapier and Dagger, Unarmed
and Quarterstaff were as follows:

Brian Gaston

Stephen W. Hancock

Ellis Adamos

Ken Mason

Angela Douglas

Lauren Bone

Kyle Legg

Stephan Welsh

Certified Teacher: **Mark D. Guinn**

Adjudicator: **Richard Raether**

UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI-KANSAS CITY

May 5th:

Martin English

Recommended:

Rapier and Dagger

Broadsword

Passed:

Unarmed

Quarterstaff

Mark McCarthy

Passed:

Rapier and Dagger

Unarmed

Broadsword

Martin Glynn

Passed:

Rapier and Dagger

Unarmed

Broadsword

Shaun Douglas

Passed:

Rapier and Dagger

Unarmed

Broadsword

Ted Shonka

Passed:

Rapier and Dagger

Unarmed

Quarterstaff

Paul Bolles

Passed:

Rapier and Dagger

Unarmed

Broadsword

Hollis McCarthy

Recommended:

Unarmed

Passed:

Rapier and Dagger

Broadsword

William G. Warren

Recommended:

Rapier and Dagger

Broadsword

Passed:

Unarmed

Instructor: **Martin English**

Adjudicator: **Richard Raether**

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

May 6th:

Mark Smith

Recommended:

Rapier and Dagger

Passed:

Unarmed

Quarterstaff

Collin O' Connor
Recommended:
Rapier and Dagger
Passed:
Unarmed
Quarterstaff

Diana Kolpak
Passed:
Rapier and Dagger
Unarmed
Quarterstaff

Greg Carr
Passed:
Rapier and Dagger
Unarmed
Quarterstaff

Scott Cumming
Recommended:
Rapier and Dagger
Unarmed
Passed:
Quarterstaff

John Carr
Recommended:
Unarmed
Passed:
Rapier and Dagger
Quarterstaff

Gwen Loeb
Recommended:
Unarmed
Passed:
Rapier and Dagger
Quarterstaff

Mary Luby
Passed:
Rapier and Dagger
Unarmed
Quarterstaff

Cheryl Golemo
Passed:
Rapier and Dagger
Unarmed
Quarterstaff

Tom Kelly
Recommended:
Rapier and Dagger
Unarmed
Quarterstaff

Matt Kozlowski
Recommended:
Rapier and Dagger
Unarmed
Quarterstaff

Andy Miller
Recommended:
Rapier and Dagger
Unarmed
Quarterstaff

Greg Dolph
Recommended:
Rapier and Dagger
Unarmed
Quarterstaff

Dave Clements
Recommended:
Rapier and Dagger
Unarmed
Passed:
Quarterstaff

Instructor: **Dr. Robin McFarquhar**
Adjudicator: **Richard Raether**

UNIVERSITY OF IOWA
May 7th

Melanie Pot

Recommended:

Unarmed

Quarterstaff

Passed:

Rapier and Dagger

Erick Pot

Recommended:

Unarmed

Quarterstaff

Passed:

Rapier and Dagger

David James

Passed:

Rapier and Dagger

Unarmed

Quarterstaff

Cheryl Graeff

Passed:

Rapier and Dagger

Unarmed

Quarterstaff

Mickey Kachingwe

Passed:

Rapier and Dagger

Unarmed

Quarterstaff

Charles White

Passed:

Rapier and Dagger

Unarmed

Quarterstaff

Darla Max

Passed:

Rapier and Dagger

Unarmed

Quarterstaff

Stanton Dossett

Passed:

Rapier and Dagger

Unarmed

Quarterstaff

Certified Teacher: **James Finney**

Adjudicator: **Richard Raether**

OHIO UNIVERSITY

On Saturday March 11th, I was very pleased to return to my alma mater for the first time in fifteen years(!) to judge Mr. Fracher's students. This was quite a thrill for me. The students were quite good, the acting focused, and the afternoon a big success. The scenes ranged from a new wave duo called "no more rap," to battling ballerinas in "Death of an Aging Ballerina." As a side note, I felt Mr. Fracher's choreography to be particularly interesting and challenging.

Machelle Nickerson

Passed:

Rapier & Dagger

Unarmed

Courtsword

Eve Michaelson

Passed:

Rapier & Dagger

Unarmed

Courtsword

Katrina Kittle

Passed:

Rapier & Dagger

Unarmed

Courtsword

Patrick Kelly

Passed:

Rapier & Dagger

Unarmed

Courtsword

Pam Wilterdink

Passed:

Rapier & Dagger

Unarmed

Courtsword

Howard Brenneman

Recommended:

Rapier & Dagger

Unarmed

Passed:

Courtsword

David Young

Recommended:

Rapier & Dagger

Unarmed

Passed:

Courtsword

Randy Burns

Recommended:

Rapier & Dagger

Unarmed

Courtsword

Chris Peters

Recommended:

Rapier & Dagger

Unarmed

Courtsword

Instructor: **Drew Fracher**

Adjudicator: **J. Allen Suddeth**

UNIVERSITY OF THE ARTS

On May 12th, for the fourth year in a row, I was very pleased to test Mr. Conwell's students at the University of the Arts in Philadelphia. Director, Mr. Walter Dallas, should be commended for his continuing commitment to stage combat instruction there. Each student receives four semesters. The audience turn out was good, and the scenes ranged from Shrew and Lear, to Fatal Attraction, and the prize went to a "Friday the 13th" parody. All the students showed a good regard for safety and technique, and there was only one failure. Mr. Conwell's students receive consistently high marks.

Bonnie Burgess

Recommended:

Unarmed

Passed:

Rapier and Dagger

Broadsword

Michael Turner

Passed:

Unarmed

Rapier and Dagger

Broadsword

Laura Robinson

Recommended:

Unarmed

Passed:

Rapier and Dagger

Broadsword

Scott Hitz

Passed:

Unarmed

Rapier and Dagger

Broadsword

Christopher Roberts

Passed:

Unarmed

Rapier and Dagger

Broadsword

Dan Burke

Passed:

Unarmed

Rapier and Dagger

Broadsword

Jeremy Venditto

Recommended:

Unarmed

Rapier and Dagger

Broadsword

Instructor: **Charles Conwell**

Adjudicator: **J. Allen Suddeth**

NEW YORK UNIVERSITY

This was the 2nd year of Fight Adjudication at New York University. It is good that this highly regarded institution is finally recognizing the need to test their acting students against the national average. We hope they expand the current program. The students performed scenes from **Julius Caesar**, **Space Patrol** and a hilarious version of Agamemnon and Clytemnestra with original dialogue in rhymed iambic pentameter. This won "Best Scene," as the actors were very committed to the text and the technique. Though there were no recommendations and one failure, these students did well for a short program of training.

Those passing in Rapier and Dagger,
Unarmed and Broadsword on May 15th were:

Elizabeth Larson
Eric Brown
Tanya Leshko
Garrett Lowe
Mark Lesley

Instructor: **Todd Loweth**
Adjudicator: **J. Allen Suddeth**

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON

On May 13th I had the pleasure of seeing twelve well coached and enthusiastic combatants who I could easily pass or recommend four for exceptional virtuosity and ability.

A very exciting **Taming of the Shrew** with excellent blade work and fine acting as well as a hilarious **An American In Paris** highlighted the morning. I need to add that Mark Collins and Michael Massari came very close to getting a recommended for a very funny and extremely able presentation of **The Garbage Guys**.

Jeff has coached them well and, with the exception of a couple of rather awkward bits in the choreography, has presented his group with just the right challenges. Congratulations for very good work in Rapier and Dagger, Unarmed and Quarterstaff.

Recommended:
Melanie Van Betten
Jeff Jeffcoat
Hugh O'Gorman
Dwight Smith

Passed:
Charlotte London
LuAnne Hebb
Eric Wells
Elizabeth Rouse
Elizabeth Albrecht
Todd Sandman
Mark J. Collins
Michael A. Massari

Instructor: **Jeff Norton**
Adjudicator: **Erik Fredricksen**

TOUCHÉ

May 13th: My day continued with a very professional presentation by the folks at Touché in San Francisco...with fine coaching by Richard Lane. I might also add that I felt the choreography was quite challenging and that is the direction we should definitely be moving in...elevating standards of the material we test them on.

My congratulations to a fine first outing by one of our newly certified teachers.

I also saw two well coached lady combatants representing the work of a former Touché member, Dexter Fidler: They were both strong passes and show that something very right and very good is going on in the teacher certification program at our national workshop.

Recommended:

Richard Clark

Rapier and Dagger
Unarmed
Courtsword
Broadsword

Larry Henderson

Rapier and Dagger
Unarmed
Courtsword
Broadsword

Louis Sumrall

Rapier and Dagger
Unarmed
Courtsword
Broadsword

Nancy Thompson

Rapier and Dagger
Unarmed
Courtsword
Broadsword

Passed:

Rod Pauley

Rapier and Dagger
Unarmed
Courtsword

John Cashman

Rapier and Dagger
Unarmed
Courtsword

Douglas Young

Rapier and Dagger
Unarmed
Courtsword

Daniel Morris

Rapier and Dagger
Unarmed
Courtsword

John Hilinski

Rapier and Dagger
Unarmed
Courtsword

Nathan Kish

Rapier and Dagger
Unarmed
Courtsword

Instructor: **Richard Lane**

Assistant: **Randy Miller**

Adjudicator: **Erik Fredricksen**

Strong Passes:

Donna DuCarme

Rapier and Dagger
Unarmed
Courtsword
Broadsword

Julie Oda

Rapier and Dagger
Unarmed
Courtsword
Broadsword

The fighters have been well costumed,
well coached, and are a class representation of
some of our very talented teachers.

Instructor: **Dexter Fidler**

Adjudicator: **Erik Fredricksen**

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Gillian Bagwell

6410 Orange St. #203

Los Angeles, CA 90048

Joe Bostick

176 The Esplanade #527

Toronto, Ontario M5A 4H2

Canada

Brian Byrnes

100 Bright St. Apt 3

Jersey City, NJ 07302

Tim and Babs Carryer

1331 N. Sheridan Ave.

Pittsburgh, PA 15206

Robert Chapin

6340 Green Valley Circle, Apt. 116

Culver City, CA 90230

Stuart Chapin

6340 Green Valley Circle, Apt. 116

Culver City, CA 90230

Mark Dean

331 Hidalgo Place

Davis, California 95616

Susan (Vagedes) Eviston

3941 Richardson Road apt 36

Independence, KY 41051

Dexter Fidler

2233 Grant Street #18

Berkeley, CA 94703

Dale Anthony Girard

1033 Downing #301

Denver, CO 80218

James Maurer

4424 E. Baseline Road #1259

Phoenix, AZ 85044

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Randi McKenzie
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Samuel C. Sandoe
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Lawrence Kansas 66046

Robert F. Scranton
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Little Rock, Arkansas 72207

Robert P. Smith
5670 Oak Tanager Court
Burke,. Va 22015

Andrea Urban
426 W. Belmont #603
Chicago, Il 60657

Carol Weinstein
78 25th Ave
San Francisco, California 94121

NEW MEMBERS

Monty Bonnell
Actor/Combatant
205 East 95th Street #3-H
New York, NY 10128

Margie Catov
Actor/Combatant
407 Atlantic Ave
Brooklyn, NY 11217

Adam Adrian Crown
Friend
1045 Coddington Road
Ithaca, New York 14856

Tamara Lewis Girard
Actor/Combatant
1033 Downing #301
Denver CO 80218

Deborah Higgins
Actor/Combatant
502 East 89th St. Apt. #15
New York, NY 10128

Ron Hubbard
Friend
3851 Meadowbrook Drive
Fort Worth Texas 76103

Captain Karl E. Marx
Friend
520 E 7th Str
Ft. Richardson, Alaska 99505

Marcella Paraskevas
P.O. Box 1351 Canal Street Station
New York, NY 10013

Ralph Anderson did the fight choreography for an off-Broadway show (Equity), **Sherlock Holmes and the Hands of Othello** at the West Beth Theatre in New York City in November of 1987. In addition to incidental punches, stabblings and garrottings there were two climactic fights, one unarmed and the other with swords—including a sword cane. From October to May he taught private classes in stage combat and had three students certified, two with recommendations. In April of 1988 Ralph directed and choreographed **Romeo and Juliet** Act II, scene i for a workshop with director Brian Murray at The Director's Company in New York City. In the summer of 1988 he was David Boushey's assistant in Unarmed for the National Stage Combat Workshop. In October of 1988 Ralph was the fight choreographer for an off-off-Broadway show, **Sins of the Father**, which is the story of John Wilkes Booth. He staged a nineteenth century version of the climactic fight in **Richard III**. In November he was the fight choreographer for a staged reading of **Conquistador Aisle**. This included a rapier fight, a rapier and dagger fight, a net and trident versus short sword and shield fight, a quarterstaff fight and finally an unarmed fight. This was done by Actor's Holiday at the Sargent Theatre in New York City. From October to April Ralph taught private classes in stage combat, culminating in four new members certified as actor/combatants.

David Boushey recently choreographed **Les Liaisons Dangereuses** for the Seattle Repertory Theatre, **Richard III** at Brigham Young University, **Romeo and Juliet** at the Pacific Conservatory Theatre in Santa Maria and the film **Northwest Passage** directed by David Lynch for ABC television. David will soon coordinate the stunts on a television feature **Gold Mountain** to be shot in Montana. He will also be coordinating the stunts for a national commercial to be shot in Seattle.

Brian Byrnes has been teaching with Allen Sudeth, Richard Raether and Rick Sordelet in New York. He worked on **Cyrano** and **A Night at the Fights** with the Fights R Us group in New York.

Dexter Fidler spent some time studying with Erik Fredricksen while he and Richard Lane choreographed fights for Erik's **Romeo and Juliet** at Cal Arts.

Drew Fracher spent the first part of the Winter in residence at Ohio University. While there he directed Sam Shepard's **Geography of a Horse Dreamer**. He spent a week with Tim and Babs Carryer staging fights for **Roshomon** at Carnegie-Mellon University. From there he conducted workshops at Virginia Commonwealth University and Western Illinois University, as well as staging fights for **Peter Pan** at Center College and for **Hamlet** at the Heritage Theatre on the army base at Ft. Knox. He is presently directing fights and assistant directing an adaptation of **Romeo and Juliet** for the Ensemble Theatre of Cincinnati. Through June, Drew will be teaching combat classes at the University of Cincinnati-College Conservatory of Music. He will then be directing **The Legend of Daniel Boone** near his home in Harrodsburg, Kentucky.

T.J. Glenn in September did Storytelling at three Renaissance Faires including one at the Cloisters in New York. In October he was stunt coordinator for the movies **Fighthouse** and **Banned** (in which **Ralph Anderson** suffered through a terrorist attack). November found T.J. as Doctor Strange in the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade and taking his group, Knightfighters, to tour Saturday Matinee Shakespeare and running master classes at the Walton Central School in upstate New York. In December he was lucky enough to fight as an armored knight in a video for Drew Fracher and David Leong down in

Kentucky. January found T.J. doing five day's work as a cop on **The Guiding Light** and resumption of classes at Montclair State College in New Jersey where he teaches.

Mark D. Guinn recently completed his Masters Program at Memphis State University in Sound and Lighting Design. He is designing lights and sound for Drew Fracher's Production of **The Legend of Daniel Boone** in Harrodsburg, then choreographing stunts and fights at **Bluejacket** and stunts at **Tecumseh!** in Ohio, then returning to Kentucky to assist Drew Fracher in Louisville at Shakespeare in Central Park.

Bruce Lecuru was hired as adjunct faculty at Interlochen Center for the Arts to teach stage combat and stage movement. While there he choreographed fights in **Lion in Winter** and **Antigone** and served as movement coach for **Antigone** and **The Importance of Being Earnest**. Bruce is currently negotiating a stage combat class with S.T.A.G.E., a non-profit organization in Dallas developed to provide actor training and job information. He is also in the process of writing "a play with stage combat."

Todd Loweth has been working on a Hamlet Project with Austin Pendleton at the Riverside Shakespeare Company for the past year. Todd just completed the choreography for **Othello** at the Intar Theatre while continuing to teach classes for beginners and advanced students in New York City. Todd is the artistic Director for Stuntworks in New York City.

Dr. Robin McFarquhar over the last year choreographed **Macbeth**, **As You Like It**, and **Titus Andronicus** for the Idaho Shakespeare Festival; **King Lear**, and **Pirates of Penzance** for the Virginia Shakespeare Festival; **Tom Jones** for the Center Theatre (Chicago); the opera **Romeo et Juliette** for the Illinois Opera Theatre, and is currently working on **The Three Musketeers** at the Illinois Repertory Theatre with playwright/director Bill Martin. In addition he has conducted various workshops in stage

combat and movement for Boise State University, and the Illinois Theatre Association. He continues to teach at the University of Illinois Theatre Department.

Doug Mumaw is currently performing with The Swordsmen. Successful adventures in cabaret swordfighting have been the Green Mill, the Kit Kat Klub, and the Highland Park High School's "Focus on the Arts." Mumaw heads for Kentucky to work with Drew Fracher on **The Legend of Daniel Boone** and then to Vegas for the Teacher Workshop. Upon his return to Chicago, The Swordsmen will rock the city.

David W. Parker was stage manager and fight coordinator for **Trumpet in the Land** for the third summer in a row. David is also head of the Attic Theatre's Conservatory Program and teaches combat there. David also staged fights at Wayne State Community College this year.

Chris Villa did the choreography for **Cyrano De Bergerac** at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival this spring after playing Jussac in **The Three Musketeers** last fall at the Irvine Theatre Faire. Chris is in his sixth year at U.C. Irvine teaching an unarmed combat/games class and a swordfighting class. He is currently writing a play, **Sinbad in the Land of the Amazons** which will possibly go into production this summer in Orange County.

David Woolley is currently staging violence and some musical numbers for **State Street**, a new musical at Columbia College and the New Musicals Foundation. The Swordsmen are performing at Street fairs, city festivals, and benefit productions for theatre companies and for an AIDS foundation. In the fall David will be staging the fights for **Cymbeline** at the Shakespeare Repertory and staging for their high school touring show. David has accepted a job as full time professor at Columbia teaching Stage Combat.

CONTRIBUTORS

ROBERT DILLON, Jr. will be completing his dissertation in "Theatrical Hopology" this August at the University of Missouri-Columbia. He will be an Assistant Professor this fall at South East Missouri University. Mr. Dillon is the founder of Kameshi Budokai, an organization focusing on classical training in the Japanese martial arts. He teaches thirteenth century Japanese sword techniques at Columbia and is a regular contributor to **Black Belt** and **Inside Karate**.

T. J. GLENN teaches stage combat at Montclair State College in New Jersey. He has done stunt coordination on several movies and has appeared in several Renaissance Faires in the New York area. T. J. can be seen occasionally in action sequences on the soaps.

BONNIE RAPHAEL is now in her third season as voice, speech, dialects and text coach for the American Repertory Theatre and Institute for Advanced Theatre Training at Harvard. Before that, she taught at a number of training institu-

tions (including Northwestern University, Ohio University and the University of Virginia) and worked at a number of regional theatres (including the Denver Center Theatre Company and the Missouri Repertory Theatre), coaching more than one hundred productions for such directors as Garland Wright, Andrei Serban, Jerry Zaks, Dario Fo, Don McKayle, Laird Williamson, Allen Fletcher, Robert Wilson, Robert Brustein, Richard Foreman and Michael Kahn. In addition, she serves as a consultant to a number of performers, political candidates, trial lawyers, television broadcasters and other professional speakers throughout the country.

CRAIG TURNER is associate professor at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill where is head of the movement training for the Professional Actor Training Program. Concurrently he is the movement coach for PlayMakers Repertory Company. His new book, **Methods and Practice of Elizabethan Swordplay** will be published this fall.

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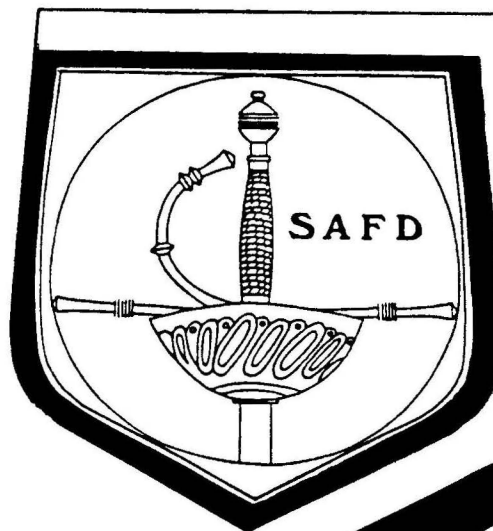
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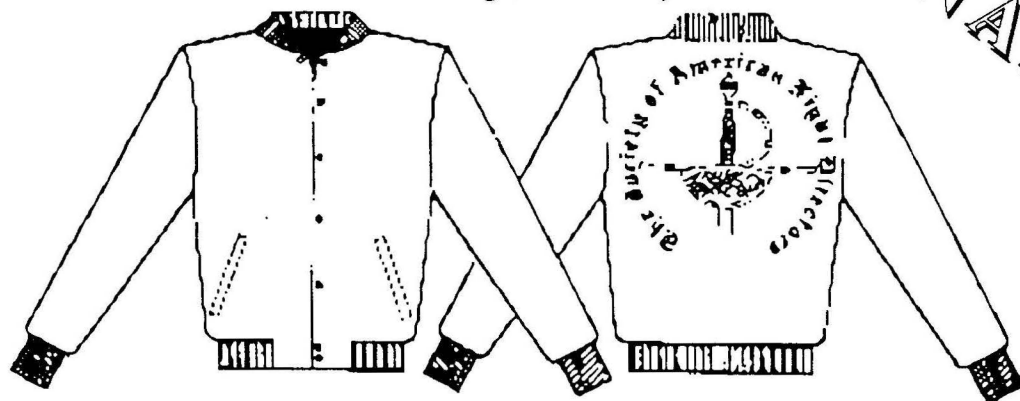


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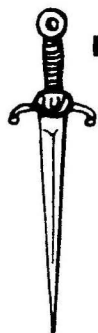
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